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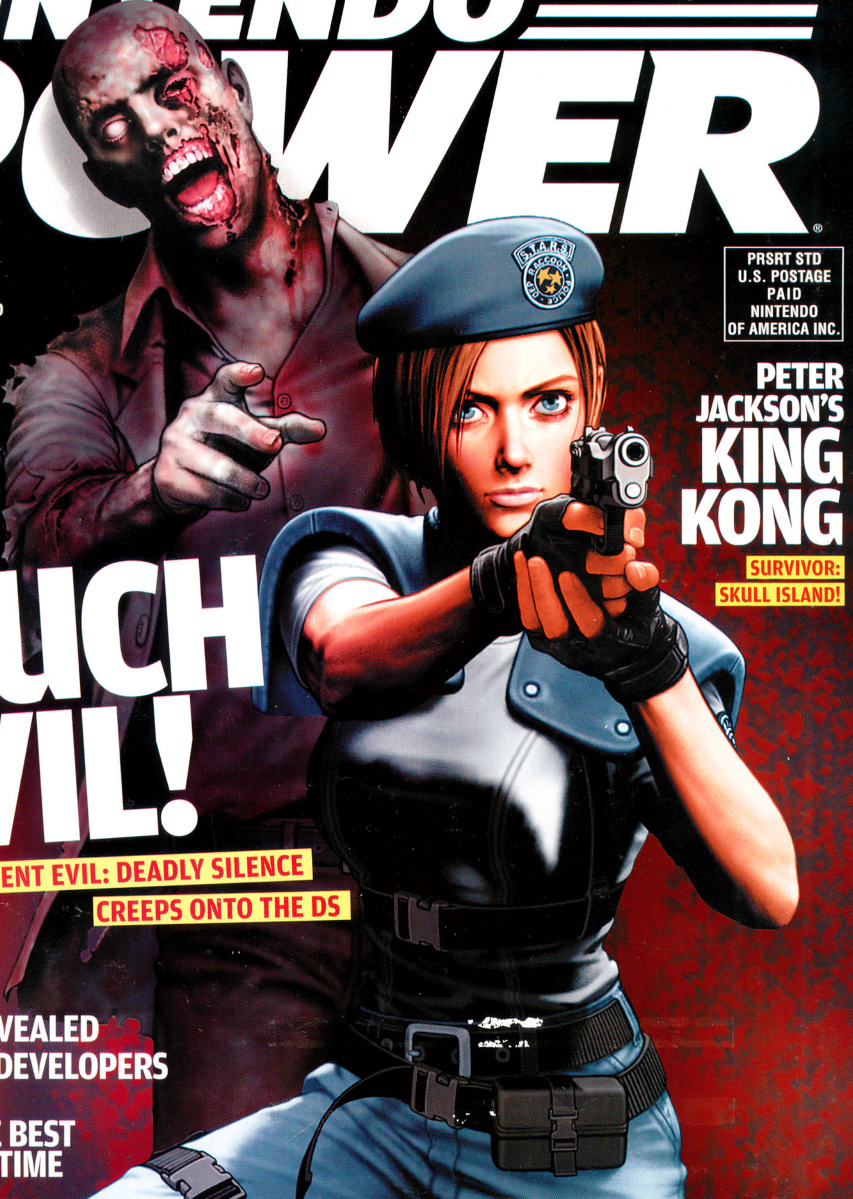

200TH ISSUE!

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

SURVIVOR: SKULL ISLAND!

TOUCH EVIL!

RESIDENT EVIL: DEADLY SILENCE CREEPS ONTO THE DS

- >NINTENDO'S FUTURE IS REVEALED
- >REVOLUTION DEVELOPERS SPEAK OUT
- >WE NAME THE BEST GAME OF ALL TIME

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PlayStation 2

BEMANI

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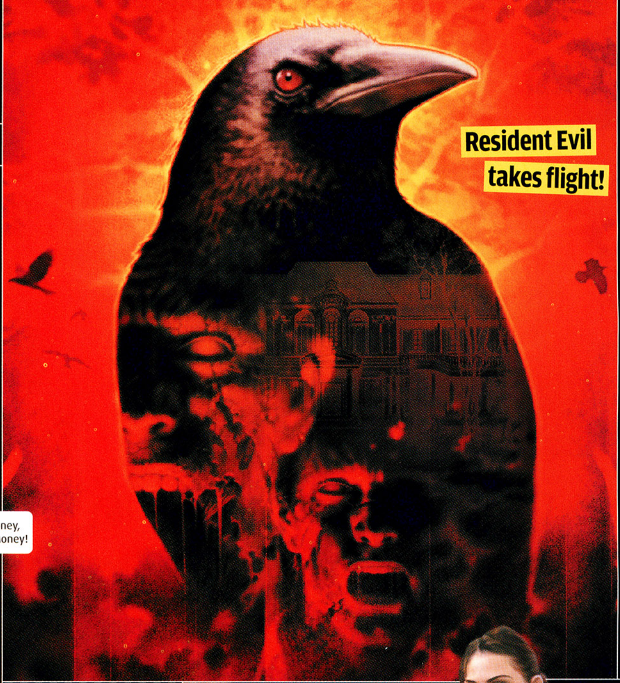
Money, Money, Money . . . Money!


Resident Evil takes flight!

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Quoth the raven, "You are dead."

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Stay still. This will only hurt for a moment.

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Anyone know a good barber? It's been a while.

These boots were made for rockin'. Pg. 78

The GEEK BILLIONAIRE LIFESTYLE
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NINTENDO POWER

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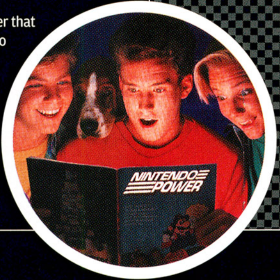

I'll see your Poland and raise you Algeria. Pg. 102

DISNEY AND WALDEN MEDIA PRESENT
THE CHRONICLES OF
NARNIA
THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

COMBINE FORCES. DEFEAT EVIL. FREE NARNIA.

BATTLE SIDE BY SIDE IN CO-OP MODE.

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CONQUER THE FORCES OF EVIL.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB Fantasy Violence

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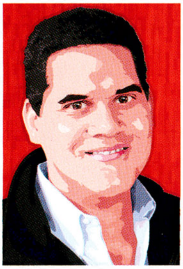
Nintendo Looks to the Future



This month marks the 200th issue of Nintendo Power. That's a great milestone. For 17 years, Nintendo fans have looked to the pages of Nintendo Power for the official word on upcoming games and hardware. But instead of looking backward, I'd like to look ahead.

What will future games be like? Will they just be faster, slicker versions of what's popular today? Nintendo believes that they will be much more, and will appeal to many more people. Historically, Nintendo has brought better and deeper gaming experiences to its customers instead of the safe bet.

The DS is a great example of a technology winning in the marketplace because of its functionality, not because it produces more polygons than a supercomputer. It's so versatile that you can bond with a virtual puppy by actually petting it and talking to it. No other video game system offers that kind of play. People who would never dream of picking up a traditional game system can immediately understand a product like Nintendogs. Because the DS is so approachable, it is expanding the video game business and creating new demand. In fact, we've seen this happening with Nintendogs' wildly successful launch, and worldwide sales over 2.5 million games. You may ask, Why expand the market? The answer can be seen in a number of recent disturbing trends: overall declining sales of video games in Japan, and dwindling teen interest in video games in the US. The way to escape that downward spiral is to go where nobody has gone before. So that's our philosophy: we'll use the right technology to bring better gaming experiences to more people than ever before, and we'll let the insecure guys brag about the size of their CPUs!

So when does the future arrive? From my perspective, it's already here. The Nintendo DS is the first expression of this thinking, and with the launch of the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection service, I think the promise of the DS is really being fulfilled. Communities of Mario Kart drivers, Tony Hawk skaters (thank you, Activision!) and Animal Crossing fans are already forming in a new gaming space offering something to hard-core and casual gamers alike. With the Metroid Prime Hunters Wi-Fi fragfests beginning in March and even more big titles coming down the line, we think Wi-Fi will be a new gaming hub. Bringing gamers together like never before and in truly mass numbers is a huge win for Nintendo because nobody else has delivered this kind of experience. And it's just the beginning.

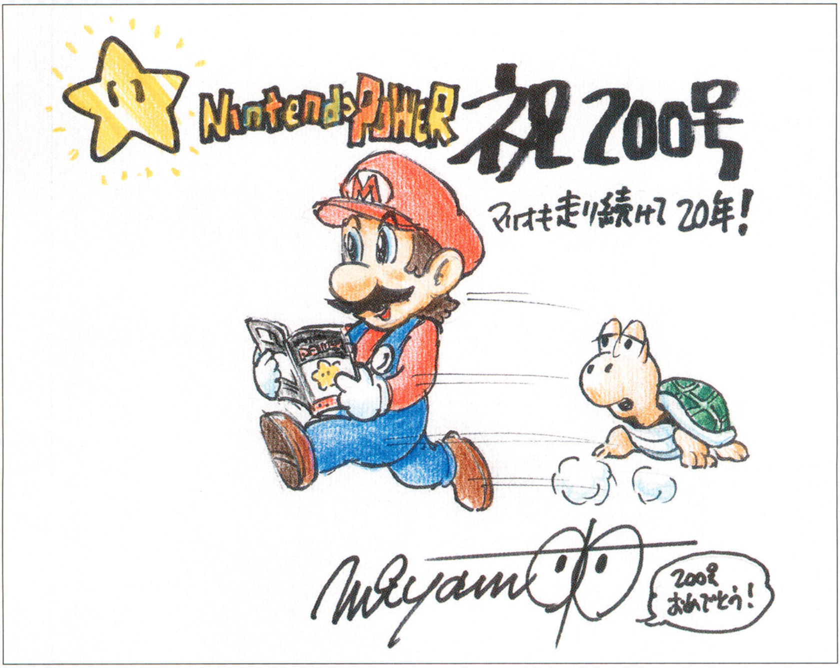
We've already revealed a few key foundation stones of Revolution: an unprecedented motion-sensitive controller, GameCube backward compatibility, the virtual library of classic Nintendo games and Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. Here's something more to think about—third-party game development is underway in Japan and elsewhere around the world. Our third-party partners are recognizing the promise of Revolution and working hard on launch titles right now. Nintendo Power will cover those stories in the coming months, and let me tell you that from what I've seen, I'm hugely excited.

The future of games will be about expansion, innovation, inclusion and the creation of new gaming communities. The old stereotype of video games being a nerdy pastime for teenage boys who like blasting aliens and fighting ogres with swords will be replaced with diverse communities of gamers, many of them competing directly against each other over Wi-Fi, or cooperating with each other in games like Animal Crossing: Wild World. Sure there will be plenty of intense action games, realistic sports, epic adventures and RPGs, but the future will hold new genres that we can barely think of today. Even the old standbys will be reimagined, leaving button-mashing behind and introducing new types of control and interaction. That's where Nintendo is going to be, and that's what Nintendo Power is going to bring you. The next 200 issues will be the most exciting yet, reporting on a new age of gaming with exclusive inside stories and images that no Nintendo fan will want to miss.

Reggie

Reggie Fils-Aime
Executive VP of Sales and Marketing
Nintendo of America

>LETTER OF THE MONTH



Our letter of the month comes from none other than Shigeru Miyamoto, congratulating us on our 200th issue. Thanks, Mr. Miyamoto!

LETTERS

NP CREW VS. THE WORLD

Hey, how about a section [in the magazine] where you list dates for when you guys will be playing [Mario Kart DS] online and having tournaments?

UltimateMaster93
via the Internet

Ask and you shall receive. Turn to page 107 to find out how you can get your butt whupped by the NP Crew.

COUNTDOWN COMMENTARY

Okay, seriously. Skies of Arcadia Legends got ranked below Tales of Symphonia [on the Top 200 list]? I have both games, and Skies is much better!

John C.
via the Internet

What is wrong with you guys? Putting Tales of Symphonia at number 107? It is one of the best RPGs of all time. It should at least be [in the] top 20.

Bijan Z.
via the Internet

As a huge fan of Skies of Arcadia Legends (my all-time favorite game), I was happy to see it make the list at number 112. Not a bad position, considering its relative obscurity. Then I looked at some of the games that beat it. I didn't have to go far to be outraged. Number 110 is Zelda II: The Adventure of Link?!? Why is this game on the list at all, much less ahead of SoA?

GilderRules13
via the Internet

I think that some of your decisions for the Top 200 [have been] a little off. For example, when I saw Dr. Mario was rated only 134, I thought you guys were nuts. I know it wasn't the greatest game in the world, but I feel it should have placed much higher based on the music alone. I also thought that Zelda II should have been higher. At least higher than WarioWare: Touched! That game got boring after you beat it, but Zelda II never gets boring. One last thing: where's Battletoads?

Andrew G.
via the Internet

I got 10 bucks that says you guys are going to put Super Smash Bros. Melee as number 1.

Rocky S.
via the Internet

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IT'S TRUE

I think that you should put a section [in the magazine] where you list fun facts or creepy information about the Nintendo Power staff.

JJ
via the Internet

Andy Myers once sat on John Madden's lap. Hey, you said creepy.

DEFENDER OF CRAP

I've noticed that every time there's a top-selling game that you consider to be crummy, you always badmouth it in any way you can. Why, in Volume 198, you poked fun at the top-selling GBA games that were licensed properties. Even if they are crummy, I don't think it's a good idea for you guys to make fun of games anymore. Ever since the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and

That's So Raven incidents, I've been worried about what you might say in your reviews—so much so that from now on, I cut the reviews section out of the magazine before reading it so I can make sure I don't have to read your insults anymore.

Taylor L.
via the Internet

P.S. If you put a "Most Painful Game of the Year" category in the Power Awards again this year, I'm unsubscribing.

What are you, the former chairman of Acclaim?

CORRECTOR'S CORNER

In Volume 198's quiz, the answers for question 10 are all labeled "a" instead of "a", "b", "c" and "d". What gives?

TheJakester7
via the Internet

Sorry about that. To atone for the error, we forced the offending party to play That's So Raven for 24 hours. By the way, the correct answer is "a."

In Volume 198, there's a misprint in your miniguide for Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance. You said that both Volke and Sothe start out as Thieves and have the potential to become Assassins, but only Volke can become an Assassin. I know multiple people that have tried to promote Sothe, and it isn't possible, even with a Master Seal or Thief Band.

Cory M.
via the Internet

You're right; in fact Sothe can't be promoted at all. We apologize for any frustration our error may have caused.

I was reading [Volume 198], which I loved by the way, but I got to the last page and you misspelled "clamoring!" You spelled it "clammering," which isn't that big of a deal, but it bugged me.

Aaron H.
via the Internet

No, you misunderstood. See, a "clammer" is one who gathers clams, so "clammering" is the act of engaging in that activity. What we meant was that Animal Crossing fans were digging for clams in the hopes that they might also find information on Wild World. Yup.

PLEASE WRITE US:

pulse@nintendopower.com

Or via carrier pigeon at:

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Redmond, WA 98073-9733

CAN YOU USE IT IN A SENTENCE?

Hey guys. You wanna chat for a while?

Ivan G.
via the Internet

We would, but we're busy clammering.

ABOUT FACE

I had a quick question about the Game Boy Micro. Will Nintendo make new faceplates that you can buy from the store?

crazy1994
via the Internet

Nintendo currently has no plans to create new faceplates for the Game Boy Micro, but we'll keep you abreast of any developments.

THAT AIN'T RIGHT

Do you think there will be a Harvest Moon [for Revolution]? I mean, it would be awesome! You could finally go hunting or slaughter the cow with the controller so you could eat it. Do you think those might be some new Harvest Moon features?

Coty R.
via the Internet

We have no idea, but it sounds delicious.

EXTREME MAKEOVER

I was wondering, if you could take some video game character that already exists and make a new version of him or her, what would the character's new identity look like?

Josh
via the Internet

We decided to give your idea a try, but something went horribly, horribly wrong.

WE DO A MEAN ROBOT

Do you have any good tips for not getting served in Dance Dance Revolution: Mario Mix?

NintendoShaman91
via the Internet

Have you seen the NP Crew? We're lucky if we don't fall off the mat.

MO' MONEY

I've been gaming since I could pick up the NES controller, and nowadays anywhere you go, you hear older gamers complaining about how much easier games are today than they used to be. Here are some examples of games I got this year that I would be willing to lay money down are far harder than any old-school games: Trauma Center, Advance Wars DS, Mr. Driller DS.

HMJACK707
via the Internet

We've got three words for you: Ghosts 'N Goblins. Please send a check or money order to:

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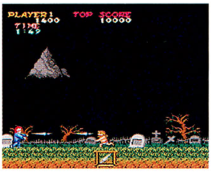


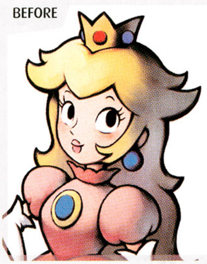
NICE TRY

On a scale of one to ten, how much do you guys like your jobs? One being "not a lot" and ten being "so much that we will give you [insert free item here]."

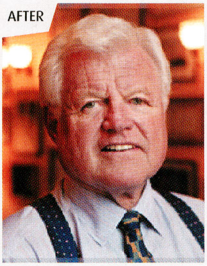
Riley P.
via the Internet

9.5. All that clammering is hard work.

BEFORE



AFTER



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MOST WANTED

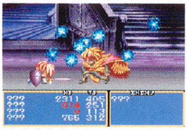
Go to nintendo.com to vote for your most-wanted games and let your voice be heard!

>NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Egg Nog

2 eggs, beaten well
3 tbsp sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1/8 tsp nutmeg
2-1/3 cups milk
Blend all ingredients together and serve chilled.

1. The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess
2. Odama
3. Chibi Robo
4. Sonic Riders
5. Harvest Moon: Magical Melody



>GAME BOY ADVANCE

1. Tales of Phantasia
2. Drill Dozer
3. Metal Slug
4. Naruto: Ninja Council
5. Pirate Battle

>NINTENDO DS

It looks like 2006 is going to be another stellar year for DS software.

1. New Super Mario Bros.
2. Metroid Prime Hunters
3. Resident Evil: Deadly Silence
4. Children of Mana
5. Final Fantasy III

TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO GAMECUBE

We don't know if you've heard, but from what we understand it behooves you to procure each and every last one of them.

1. Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness
2. Mario Superstar Baseball
3. Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance
4. Dance Dance Revolution: Mario Mix
5. Madagascar
6. Ultimate Spider-Man
7. Super Mario Sunshine
8. SpongeBob SquarePants: The Battle for Bikini Bottom
9. Madden NFL 06
10. Super Smash Bros. Melee

TOP SELLERS

>GAME BOY ADVANCE

We're sure Bratz: Rock Angelz is very compelling, but you really ought to give Gunstar Super Heroes a try.

1. Pokémon Emerald
2. Bratz: Rock Angelz
3. LEGO *Star Wars*
4. Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3
5. Ultimate Spider-man
6. Disney Princess
7. Power Rangers SPD
8. Danny Phantom: The Ultimate Enemy
9. Donkey Kong: King of Swing
10. Madagascar

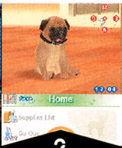
Even Glalie enjoys a good egg nog.

TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO DS

Castlevania at number one? Now we're talkin'.

1 Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow



2 Nintendogs: Dachshund

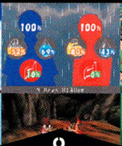
3 Nintendogs: Labrador

4 Nintendogs: Chihuahua

5 Trauma Center: Under the Knife

6 Advance Wars: Dual Strike

7 Super Mario 64 DS



8 Lost in Blue

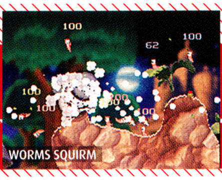
9 Zoo Tycoon

10 Madagascar

Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source.

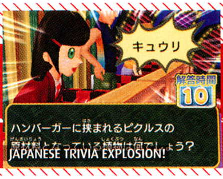
News

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PLAY



WORMS SQUIRM

POKéMON FACE NEW EVIL



JAPANESE TRIVIA EXPLOSION!

LONG LIVE GAMING!

Spread of the Revolution

The world's been buzzing and blogging like crazy since the Revolution controller was revealed. Now game makers speak their mind.

When Nintendo president Satoru Iwata revealed the Revolution controller at the Tokyo Game Show, he set off a frenzy of gamer speculation, from how specific series might be transformed by the dynamic device to which genres would benefit the most. Now we're starting to hear from the publishers and developers (more to come next month) whose opinions will directly impact the future of gaming.

"As a longtime Nintendo fan, I applaud the spirit of innovation and creativity of the Revolution controller. Being wireless and designed similarly to a TV controller, it's an innovative, ergonomic winner right out of the box. The beauty of the controller is that possibilities for new game ideas are limitless. . . . You can build an entire game concept around the controller's features or find ways to integrate them into existing franchises. Right now at EA, we're exploring both of these paths. Our developers are inspired and excited by the new controller's features."

—John Schappert,
Senior VP/Group Studio General Manager, Electronic Arts Canada

"Anyone present at Iwata-san's unveiling of the controller at TGS has imagined what future versions of Nintendo classics will be like. Envisioning Link's spin attack, Mario's triple jump and Samus's gunplay on Revolution is an intriguing exercise. Similarly, the Activision design teams are creatively charged as they determine how the controller can best be used on our titles. How will Spider-Man's Revolution webs be cast, Tony Hawk's deck be flipped and Call of Duty grenades be thrown?"

—Steve Pearce,
VP of Technology, Activision

"The Revolution controller is very intuitive and immersive and should allow the character to become more of an extension of the player. . . . It should also inspire creators to explore innovation and bring back bored consumers to gaming."

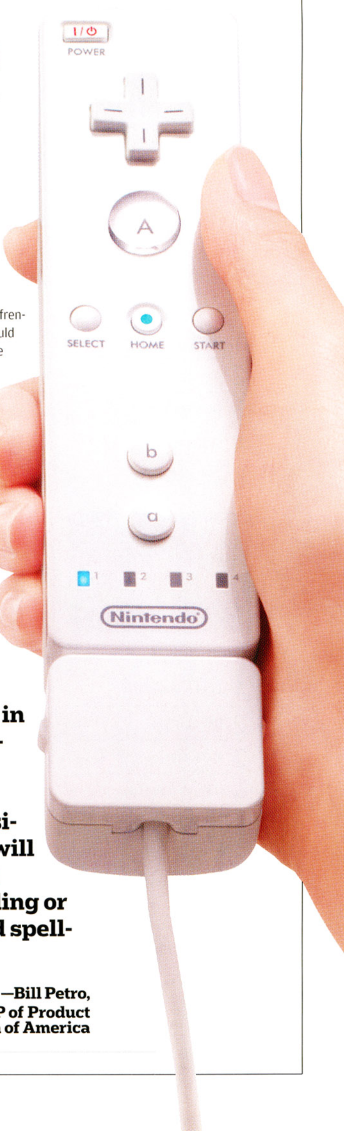
—Rod Cousens,
CEO, Codemasters

"Think about how many players you know that move controllers upward when pressing the jump button or turn it while steering in a racing game. With Revolution, these movements can be made to affect gameplay. Any genre that's suffered from traditional controller limitations stands to initially benefit the most, particularly ones with too many complex button combinations. Also, mouse-oriented PC genres (RTS, adventure games) could become much more console-friendly with the Revolution controller."

—Jack Sorensen,
Executive VP, Worldwide Studios, THQ

"Role-playing games will be greatly enhanced, due to new control styles. Pointing will make moving in large environments very simple, and twist- and position-sensing will allow for dual weapon wielding or gesture-based spellcasting."

**—Bill Petro,
Senior VP of Product Development, Sega of America**



“The Revolution controller will make you feel like you’re in the game. Not just playing the game. And there is a big difference.”

—Bill Gardner, President/CEO, Eidos

“The Revolution controller is truly innovative and will enable game design to take advantage of gamers’ full range of hand motions. Much as we’ve seen with the Nintendo DS, the Revolution control interface will lead to gameplay innovations.”

—Michael Ryder, VP of Worldwide Production, Buena Vista Games

“In the landscape of primarily linear evolution, it is refreshing to see a product like the Revolution that truly strives to redefine game design. As a game designer, I am always excited to see products . . . which open the door to so many new possibilities.”

—Noah Hughes, Director of Design, Crystal Dynamics

“Nintendo has created an innovative new controller, fully immersing the gamer with a revolutionary interface. The controller should expand the marketplace by appealing to the mass audience as well as avid gamers. And the development community will have as much fun exploring the power of the Revolution controller as consumers will playing it.”

—Jean-Marcel Nicolai, Senior VP of Worldwide Content, Atari

“The Revolution controller breaks the ‘push button’ experience of other platforms, where the player must go through an abstract action—pushing a button—to complete an action. With the Revolution, action is completely natural and physical. We can propose new types of interactions that are easy and fun, as they rely on a simple gesture. We can translate into video-game interactions all the tools you manipulate with your hand: the sculptor’s tool, the doctor’s scalpel, the fireman’s hose. . . . Imagine you are a doctor curing patients or an architect who builds his own house! It opens up so many possibilities that we already have too many ideas. All the designers that I’ve spoken with at Ubisoft are buzzing with amazing ideas!”

—Nicolas Eypert, Creative Director, Ubisoft

“I can certainly see lots of opportunities for classic-style games like platformers that new and old gamers will really enjoy. We’ve thought of several titles that we’re planning that will fit in well. Any game that has the flow of motion in three dimensions will benefit with Revolution. Flying games will be wild and more fun than ever.”

—Bill Gardner, President/CEO, Eidos

“First-person shooters will be as easy to control as their PC cousins, only now the monsters will be as large as your TV set.”

—Nicolas Eypert, Creative Director, Ubisoft

The View from Japan

While North American publishers have been looking into the creative potential for Revolution games, Japanese visionaries have revealed their first impressions in the December issue of *Nintendo Dream*. We excerpt a few thoughts from the Japanese magazine:

“I felt like I was touching the screen, like the DS, yet very different. I could swing it and twist it . . . it’s fun to think of ideas based solely on that.”

—Hironobu Sakaguchi, Mistwalker, producer of ASH (DS)

“I was just as surprised by the look of the controller as I was by playing with it. I was really struck by Nintendo’s bold direction. All game creators will be inspired by seeing it in motion.”

—Toshihiro Nagoshi, Sega, producer of Super Monkey Ball and F-Zero GX/AX

“It’d be a shame if developers only transfered existing games to this system. They’ve got to envision a more creative route then buckle up for a wild ride.”

—Koichi Ishii, Square Enix, producer of the Mana series

“While some have watched the growing number of buttons on controllers with alarm, Nintendo has bravely taken on the problem, not only by reducing the number of them but also by breaking from the tradition of holding a controller in both hands. It was a surprise, especially since Revolution will enable gameplay that past consoles couldn’t. This has expanded the ability for game creators to pursue their visions.”

—Ken Sugimori, Game Freak, Pokémon Art Director

“I was excited to make Killer 7 for the GCN, so my mind raced with possibilities for Revolution. Actually, I’ve already got a plan for a very revolutionary game.”

—Suda 51, Grasshopper, producer of Contact (DS)

“As the DS stylus invited new kinds of game content, this controller has big potential, too. For example, it’s likely to lead to text input similar to the one-thumb method on mobile phones. Also, if someone holds two controllers, with a different feature assigned to each one, the possibilities expand even more.”

—Toru Iwatani, Namco, creator of Pac-Man

“I respect Nintendo’s stance on making games more inviting, so I was amazed to see that the controller was a slender device with one face button. It’s going to make a big impact. While the DS touch screen has made gaming more accessible, button use complicates its games. Ideally, Revolution will keep it simple.”

—Masahiro Sakurai, Sora, Kirby and Smash Bros. creator

Excerpts published with permission from *Nintendo Dream*

DS DEBUTS

Worldwide Road Trip

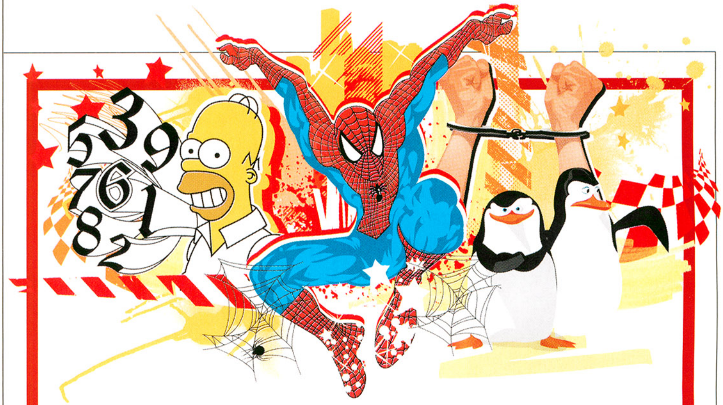
Mario Kart DS players get on the Wi-Fi bandwagon in big numbers.

Mario Kart DS roared from the starting line when nearly half of the 112,000 people who purchased the racer in its first week gave it a spin via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. A simple setup and no subscription fee make Wi-Fi racing a turnkey operation.

Gamers Go Wild in Japan

Animal Crossing: Wild World scores big with reviewers and fans.

The notoriously critical reviewers for Japan's *Weekly Famitsu* have given Animal Crossing: Wild World a score of 37 (out of 40). Japanese players responded to the good word by scooping up 200,000 copies of the game on its first day of release, a new DS record.



The Big News. In Short.

Spidey and X-Men won't be putting their powers to use for anyone but Activision through 2017 now that the publisher has signed an incredible extension to its agreement with Marvel, which answers the question of who will be publishing *Spider-Man 6*. . . . ***Shrek 3* and *Madagascar 2*** are just the start for Activision's plans with DreamWorks; the publisher has also extended its deal with the animation studio for many more future flicks, such as *Bee Movie* and *Kung Fu Panda*. . . . Electronic Arts is no stranger to long-term deals: it's got dibs on multiple games based on ***The Simpsons***, good news for those who thought EA's Road Rage game was comic gold. . . . Heard of **Sudoku**? It's the number-crunching supercraze that's pwning crossword puzzles as America's favorite pen-and-paper pastime; Sudoku will now hit the GBA in February, thanks to Mastiff. . . . Ubisoft seems to be taking Splinter Cell in a different direction judging by clues on the teaser site for **Splinter Cell 4**. It reveals that Sam Fisher is headed down a less-than-heroic path of bank heists that leads to jail time, and looking scarier than a skinhead. . . . **Free Radical** is devising a mature action game for Ubisoft that dwells on moral dilemmas. The developer of Second Sight and the publisher of Beyond Good & Evil—seems like a match made in heaven and hell. We'd bet it shows up (platforms still unspecified) at E3. —Steven G.

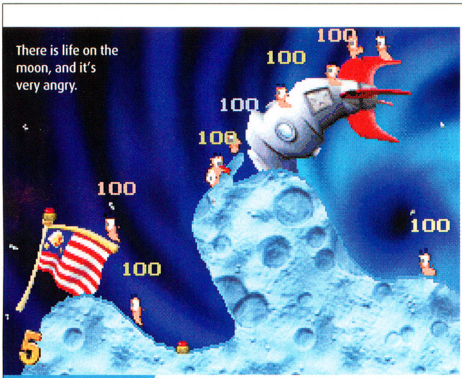
PARENTAL POWER

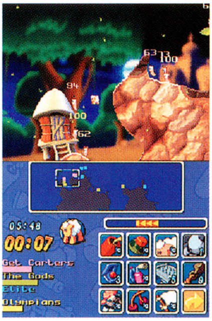
Restrictions May Apply

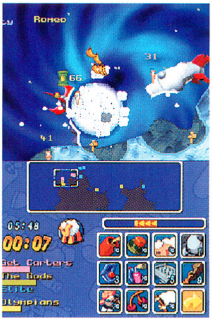
Parental game controls join the Revolution's many innovations. You don't want baby bro to get eaten by a zombie and end up scarred for life, right?

Looking forward to a Revolution version of Resident Evil? Mortal Kombat? True Crime? Well, if you're a younger gamer, you're going to have one more reason to discuss the content of such games with your folks. Exemplifying a trend in the next generation of video game consoles, Nintendo of America announced in November that the Revolution will offer a password-controlled option that allows parents to determine which games the system will play. The ESRB rating will be coded into each game, and parents will be able to lock out levels of games they deem inappropriate. This decision marks the first time that all major consoles will offer parental control choices; Microsoft and Sony have adopted similar policies for their new hardware. All you toddlers out there know what this means: no more playing Splinter Cell during naptime. —Chris H.

No more poppin' caps in gangstas for you, Baby Luigi!


There is life on the moon, and it's very angry.


War zones are randomly generated from five graphic themes.


The lower screen displays a map, team progress and inventory.

BATTLE OF THE BAIT

Worms Details Unearthed

THQ brings turn-based squirmer Worms: Open Warfare to the DS with wacky graphics, laughs and really big guns.

The Worms series pushes a lot of buttons. It's strategy. It's comedy. It's the enjoyment of lobbing heavy explosives at unsuspecting critters. When the series comes to the DS this spring, worms will become worm food in surprising ways, thanks to a huge collection of weapons from previous titles (available through touch-screen selection) and revamped AI-controlled worm behavior. The battles will take place on five new types of landscapes, including the cratered surface of the moon and the jungle, and they're designed to be shorter than the skirmishes of previous Worms titles to accommodate on-the-go handheld gaming. Up to four players will be able to share one DS for pass-around play or connect for a wireless war.
—George S.

DON'T-MISS Calendar

New titles almost dry up in the first three weeks of 2006, so if the arrival of Electroplankton and a few other key dates don't grab you, burn through your holiday cash on 2005's late, great releases.

12-31

A new year of ACWW starts with a bang.
Anyone who picked up Animal Crossing: Wild World in late '05 will be too immersed to acknowledge that other games exist anyway! And tonight, countless fans will surely meet via Wi-Fi and LAN to ring in a new year with their fave obsession.

1-9

Will you be shocked? Electroplankton surfaces on DS at last.
One of the most experimental games ever made hits North America, and only through nintendo.com, Nintendo World and major online stores. Don't know what to make of the ground—er, seabreaking DS title? Check out the review on page 99.

1-10

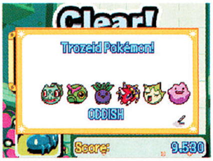
Blue Bomber rampages again.
In 2004, Capcom gave Mega Man fans massive sci-fi value with the GCN Mega Man Anniversary Collection. Now the publisher delves into a later MM era with another vast compilation in Mega Man X Collection.

1-23

True or false? It's too cold for golf.
False! With the second golf title to grace the DS, True Swing Golf, Nintendo hopes to push the art of the sweet tee-off even further this winter. Even if your skillz stink, don't lob your stylus at competitors. You could put out an eye that way.

BALL FOUR!

Pokémon, Face-to-Face



Genius Sonority, developer of Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness, has brought its unique spin to Pokémon and puzzle games with Pokémon Trozei for the Nintendo DS.

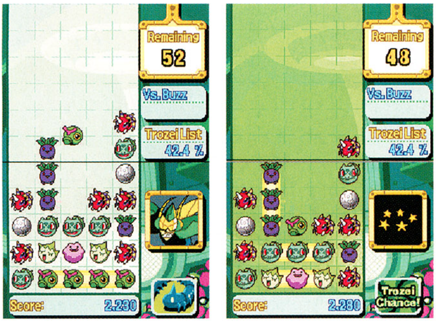
With slick, comic-book style, Pokémon Trozei reimagines the Pokémon universe. Forget what you know about Hoenn and Johto—new characters and locations give fresh life to the long-running franchise.

Pokémon Trozei is a simple-to-learn, tough-to-master puzzler that uses the adorable faces of more than 380 Pokémon as puzzle pieces. Employing the touch screen to move their faces around, you must line up four or more same Pokémon, either vertically or horizontally, to "Trozei" (or eliminate them) from the board. After making that first chain, you have a short time during which you can line up three, then two Pokémon in a row or column. The longer the combo, the more points you earn.

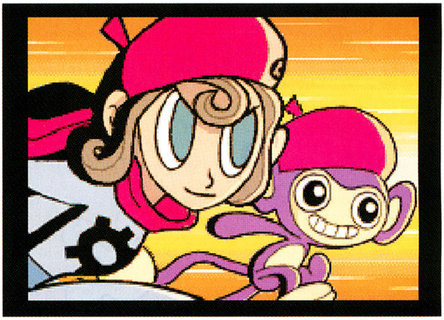
Pokémon Trozei's adventure mode features secret agent Lucy Fleetfoot. She must infiltrate an organization called Phobos Battalion, a group responsible for stealing Pokémon, and rescue the stolen Pokémon by playing increasingly difficult challenges.

Other modes include Endless play in which you can get rare Pokémon, and several multiplayer challenges. The mulitplayer challenges include a head-to-head battle mode, and a cooperative mode that lets you and a friend team up to get a high score. Better still, Pokémon Trozei supports download play—send a demo copy to a friend and take him on in battle, or let him play on his own in Endless play. —Chris S.

Not only are Ash and the professor nowhere to be found; the Phobos Battalion is way worse than that pesky Team Rocket ever was.



Line up four of the same Pokémon (like the Caterpie, above) to start a chain reaction. Ditto can match any Pokémon—use it to maintain a big combo.

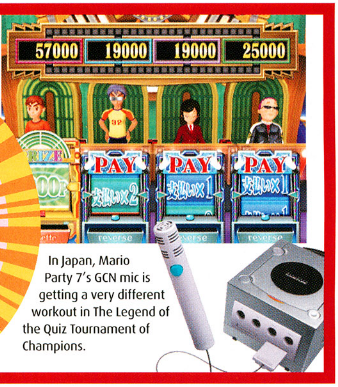


Armed with awesome matching pink berets, Lucy Fleetfoot and her pal Aipom are off to rescue the purloined Pokémon.

NEWS FROM JAPAN!

The Ultimate in Trivia

BRAIN AGE MADE COUNTLESS DS owners' brains muscular. Now Japanese players are bench-pressing facts with The Legend of the Quiz Tournament of Champions on the GCN. Released in December, the Nintendo title is about simulating high-pressure TV quizzers, packing in five shows that draw upon 8,000-plus questions in 11 categories such as sports, manga and geography. But the most intense touch? It's 100% operated by the GCN's mic peripheral, a new high for trivia control. —Steven G.



In Japan, Mario Party 7's GCN mic is getting a very different workout in The Legend of the Quiz Tournament of Champions.

GAME WATCH FORECAST

Yes, it's the time of year when the list gets skinny, because stores are fat with late-'05 pickings. Fortunately, we're hoping for an electric cattle prod for the holidays; we'll soon be chasing the new year's secrets into the open!

●○○ Announced
●●○ In Development
●●● Ready for Release

Game Title	Publisher	●●●
Game Title	Publisher	●●● — New games added to the list

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

American Chopper: Full Throttle	Activision	●○○
Barnyard	THQ	●●○
Chaos Field Expanded	O~3	●●●
Chibi Robo	Nintendo	●●○
Curious George	Namco	●●○
FIFA Street 2	EA	●○○
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball	Activision	●○○
Harvest Moon: Magical Melody	Natsume	●●○
Kirby*	Nintendo	●●○
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	Nintendo	●●○
Mega Man X Collection	Capcom	●●●
Mini-Golf Mayhem	Crave	●○○
The Movies	Activision	●●○
Naruto: Clash of Ninja	Tomy/D3PA	●●○
Naruto: Clash of Ninja 2	Tomy/D3PA	●●○
Odama	Nintendo	●●○
Pac-Man World Rally	Namco	●●○
Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones	Ubisoft	●●●
Rampage: Total Destruction	Midway	●●○
Sonic Riders	Sega	●●○
Starcraft: Ghost	VU Games	●●○
Teen Titans	Majesco	●●○
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter	Ubisoft	●○○
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell 4*	Ubisoft	●○○
World Championship Poker	Crave	●●○

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Barnyard	THQ	●●○
Curious George	Namco	●●○
Drill Dozer	Nintendo	●●○
Final Fantasy IV Advance	Nintendo	●●●
Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue	Nintendo	●○○
Hardcore Pool	Telegames	●●○
Hugo: Bukkazoom	Namco	●●○
Legend of the River King Advance	Natsume	●●○
Mega Man Anniversary Collection	Capcom	●●○
Metal Slug	SNK	●●○
Naruto 2*	Tomy/D3PA	●○○
Naruto: Ninja Council	Tomy/D3PA	●●○
Pirate Battle	Orbital	●●○
The Proud Family	Disney	●●○
Santa Claus Saves the Earth	Telegames	●●○
Scurge: Hive	Orbital	●●○
Sudoku	Mastiff	●○○
Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go!	Disney	●○○
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Puzzle Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Table Games	Telegames	●●○
World Poker Tour 2K6	2K Sports	●○○
World Reborn	Destination	●●○
X-Bladez: Inline Skater	Crave	●●○
Xyanide	Playlogic	●○○

NINTENDO DS

A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	●●○
Age of Empires: The Age of Kings	Majesco	●●○
Barnyard	THQ	●○○
Battles of Prince of Persia	Ubisoft	●●●
Black & White Creatures	Majesco	●●○
Blades of Thunder 2	SummitSoft	●●●
Boktai*	Konami	●○○
Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day	Nintendo	●●○
Brain Twisting Game Vol. 1*	Aruze	●●○
Bust-a-Move DS	Majesco	●●●
Children of Mana	Square Enix	●●○
ChoroQ DS	Atlus	●○○
Dragon Booster	Konami	●●●
Dragon Quest Monsters*	Square Enix	●○○
Dynasty Warriors*	Koei	●●○
Egg Monster Heroes	Square Enix	●●○
Electroplankton	Nintendo	●●●
Europa Universalis II	Pocket PC	●●○
Final Fantasy III	Square Enix	●●○
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*	Square Enix	●○○
Finding Nemo*	THQ	●○○
Fushigi No Dungeon*	Chun Soft	●○○
The Game of Life DS	Atlus	●○○
Golden Nugget Casino DS	Majesco	●●○
Guilty Gear Dust Strikers	Majesco	●●○
Harvest Moon DS	Natsume	●●○
Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi*	D3PA	●○○
Historical Simulation Game*	Koei	●○○
Intern Tendo Dokuta	Spike	●●○
Jam with the Band*	Nintendo	●●○
Johnny Rocketfingers	Conspiracy	●○○
Legend of the River King*	Natsume	●○○
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords*	Nintendo	●○○
Lizzie McGuire & That's So Raven*	Disney	●●○
Mage Knight: Destiny's Soldier	Namco	●●○
Mah-Jong*	Koei	●○○
Metroid Prime Hunters	Nintendo	●●○
Mini RC Rally	SummitSoft	●●○
Mobile Suit Gundam Seed	Bandai	●○○
Monster Rancher	Tecmo	●○○
Moonlight Fables*	Majesco	●○○
New Super Mario Bros.*	Nintendo	●●○
One Piece	Bandai	●●○
Organizer Plus	SummitSoft	●○○
Pac-Man World 3	Namco	●●●
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	Disney	●○○
Quad Desert Fury 2	Majesco	●○○
Resident Evil: Deadly Silence	Capcom	●●○
Scurge: Hive	Orbital	●●○
Shin Megami Tensei DS*	Atlus	●○○
Slime Morimori Dragon Quest*	Square Enix	●○○
Super Princess Peach	Nintendo	●●○
Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop	Bandai	●●○
Top Gun	Mastiff	●●○
Top Spin 2	2K Sports	●●●
True Swing Golf	Nintendo	●●○
Ultimate Brain Games	Telegames	●○○
Ultimate Card Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●○○
Vandal Hearts*	Konami	●○○
Winx Club	Konami	●○○
World Soccer Winning Eleven*	Konami	●○○
Worms DS	THQ	●●○

* Tentative title

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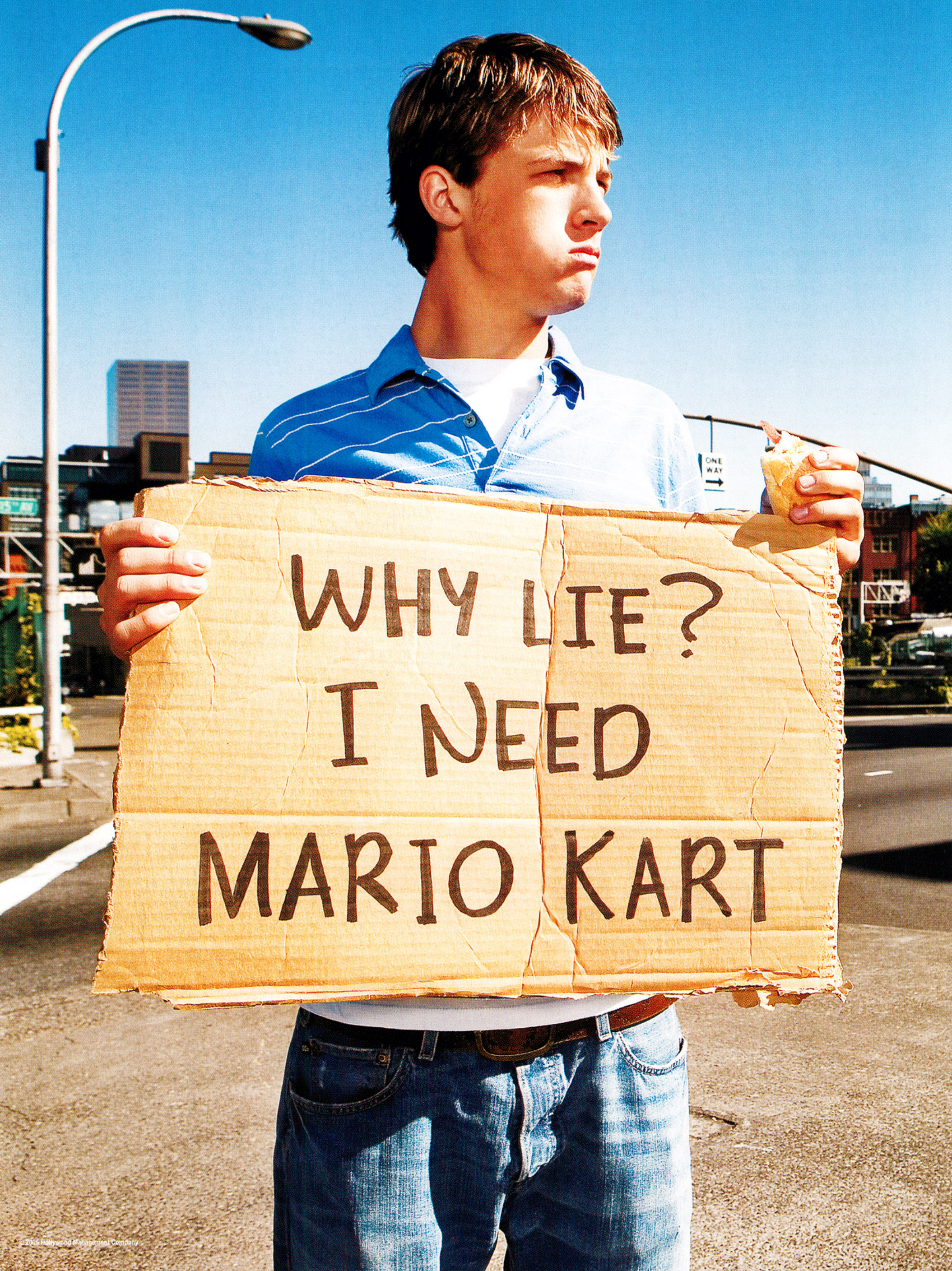
ONE WAY
WHY LIE?
I NEED
MARIO KART

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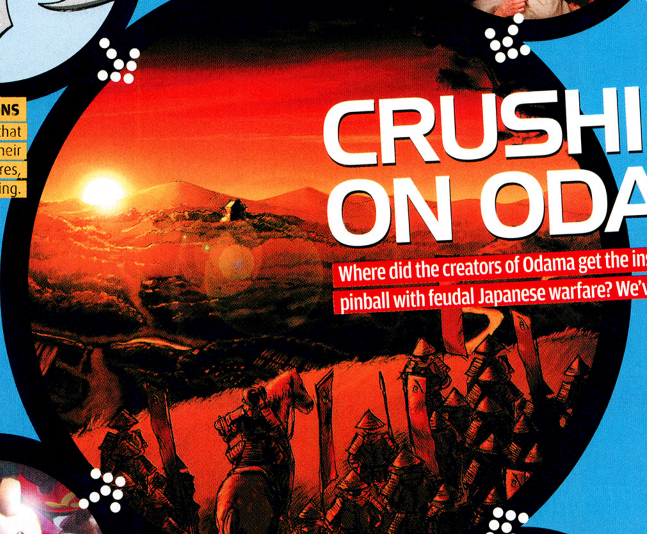
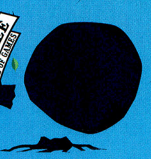
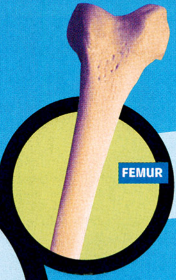
CRUSHING ON ODAMA

Where did the creators of Odama get the inspiration to mix pinball with feudal Japanese warfare? We've got a few ideas.







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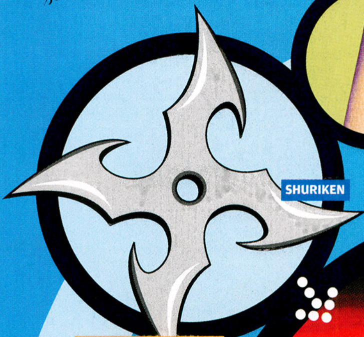
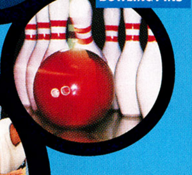


SHURIKEN

ANCIENT WEAPONS

We haven't confirmed that ancient armies pulverized their foes with enormous spheres, but we can't help dreaming.

DOMINOES



BOWLING PINS

SHOPPERS DURING THE HOLIDAY RUSH

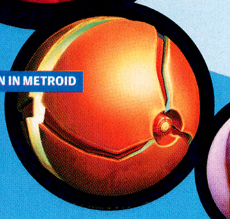
THINGS YOU KNOCK OVER

When something gets in the way of the Odama, a bowling ball or your Aunt Alice, it becomes a very flat something.

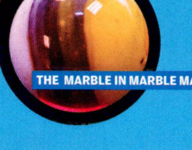
AIAI IN SUPER MONKEY BALL

CHARACTERS WHO ROLL

Round is sooo not square. Most characters need wheels to roll. We celebrate those who don't.



SAMUS ARAN IN METROID



THE MARBLE IN MARBLE MADNESS

PAVLOV'S DOG

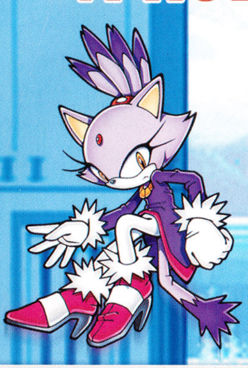
YOU RANG?

Barking orders and ringing bells will get you to your goal in Odama, or a club sandwich if you live in a swanky manor.

YOUR BUTLER

9 OUT OF 10! "ONE HECK OF A ROLLER COASTER RIDE"

• NINTENDO POWER

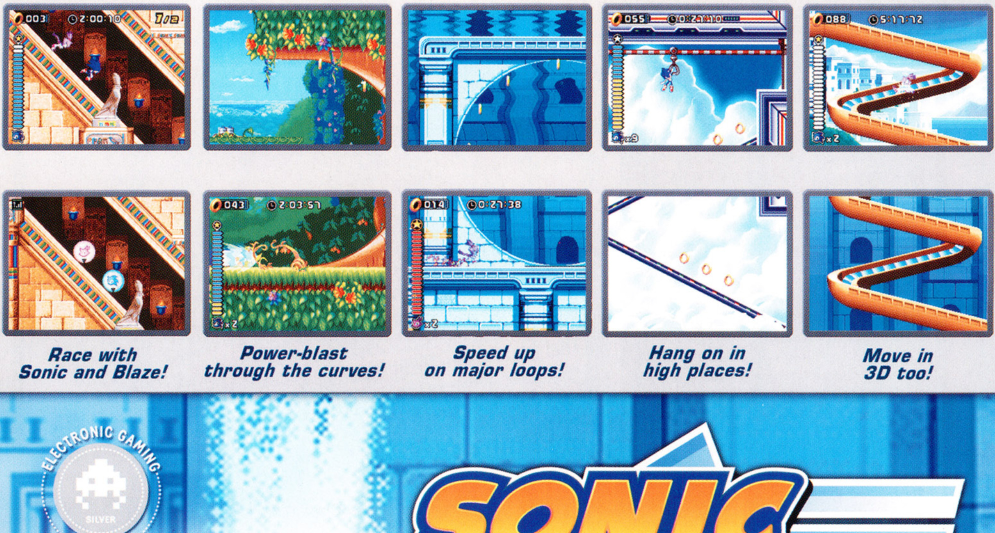


Sonic Rush pushes the DS to its limits as Sonic rushes, races and dashes between BOTH screens with dizzying dives, near vertical curves, extreme jumps and brain-twisting loops! Prepare for a whole new dual screen experience, Sonic-style!

9.5 OUT OF 10 !

"That Sonic epiphany we've been waiting for all these years."

• Play Magazine



Race with Sonic and Blaze!

Power-blast through the curves!

Speed up on major loops!

Hang on in high places!

Move in 3D too!

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY SILVER

"Sonic is about speed, and that's what Rush delivers in spades."

• Electronic Gaming Monthly

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Rolling, clashing and striking—this month's preview titles are action packed.

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Back in My Day . . .

>TALES OF PHANTASIA

PLATFORM: **GBA** • PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO** • RELEASE: **MARCH 2006**

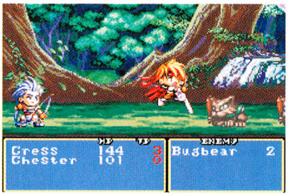
Man, I miss the early '90s. It seemed like every time I finished an RPG, another one was about to launch. And I'm not talking about some cheesy, half-baked dungeon hack; I'm talking about the salad days of RPGs—games that would consume multiple "sick days" as I plowed through a bazillion different, exotic monsters on my way toward saving the world from total mana depletion, or whatever.

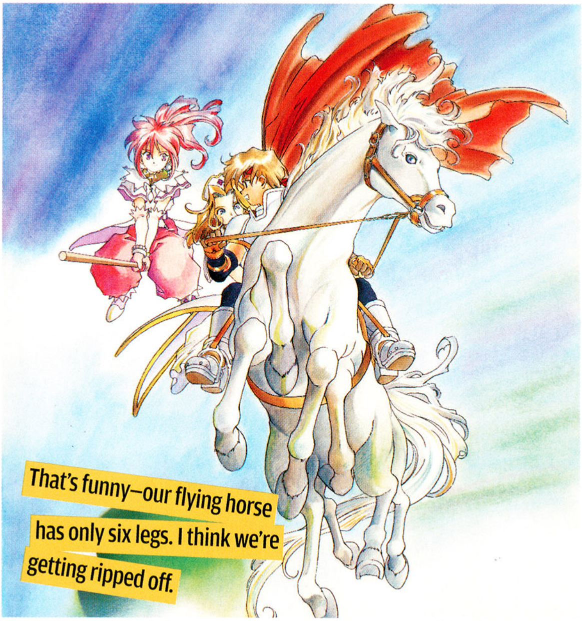
Back then, it was all Squaresoft—I blame games like Chrono Trigger, Secret of Mana and the Final Fantasy series for keeping my grades down throughout high school. But Squaresoft wasn't the only company hard at work on RPGs back then—Namco began its own series of serious RPGs in Japan with Tales of Phantasia for Super Famicom (the Super NES's Japanese equivalent) in 1995. Although North America has seen some of Phantasia's glorious descendants in the Tales of Destiny games for PlayStation and the stellar Tales of Symphonia for Nintendo GameCube, we haven't had the opportunity to see where it all started—until now. More than 10 years after the Japanese launch, Tales of Phantasia is finally coming to America.

Tales of Symphonia veterans will immediately recognize the lineage between the recent GCN hit and Tales of Phantasia, beginning with the combat system. Phantasia's battles are all fought in real time—your party slashes weapons and executes special skills against enemies on a side-scrolling battlefield. You control the main character's actions yourself, while you preset your party's tactics to attack, cast support spells or defend.

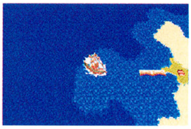
The familiarities exist outside of battle, as well—as you progress through the game, your characters earn new titles to reflect their accomplishments. For example, when one of your characters talks a captain into giving your party a boat ride to a distant island, she gains the title of "negotiator." The party can also learn recipes to create dishes that recover health or cure poison and other status effects. Even some of the mythology is the same as in the original game, but too much detail might give away some juicy plot points.

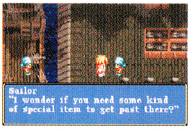
Tales of Phantasia is supposed to hit stores in March—I'd better start storing up my "sick days" now. —CHRIS S.



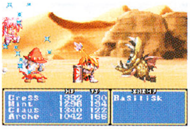


That's funny—our flying horse has only six legs. I think we're getting ripped off.





Sailor
"I wonder if you need some kind of special item to get past there?"



Roll Model

>SUPER MONKEY BALL: TOUCH & ROLL

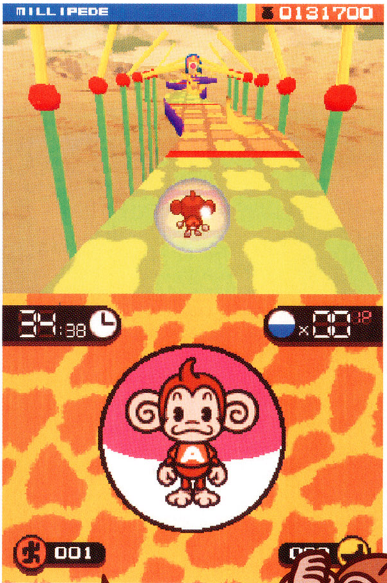
PLATFORM: **DS** • PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA** • RELEASE: **FEBRUARY 2006**

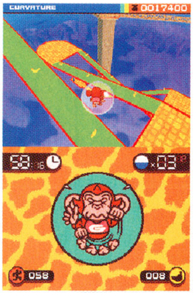
It's easy to go bananas for Super Monkey Ball's simian heroes. They're cute. They're funny. They're trapped in plastic balls and they're always willing to go over the edge to help you reach your goal. Since 2001, speedy Baby, sturdy Gongon and all-around great rollers AiAi and Meemee have been flipping, flying and ricocheting over dangerous terrain just inches away from the great abyss. The series' DS debut offers a new set of precarious paths for the under-evolved athletes, and they're as devilishly difficult to navigate as ever—especially the ones with moving parts, bumpers and holes. And, though Touch & Roll doesn't have a story that links the levels together—as Super Monkey Ball 2 does—the challenges come in groups of 10, each of which follows a theme, such as jungle brush or desert sand. You can follow them in order to unlock more areas, or select them individually to practice.

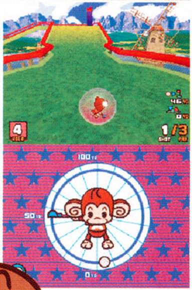
The top screen displays the 3-D levels. The bottom screen shows time remaining, the number of monkey balls in reserve, your current speed and the bananas that you've collected. You can operate the monkey ball by using the Control Pad or by touching a circle that rests in the middle of the bottom screen. You don't have to swipe it with quick strokes as you do Pac-Man in Pac 'n Roll. You just have to place the tip of your stylus above the circle to make it move forward, under it to make it stop and to the left or right to execute turns. Precision is key, so it pays to have a steady hand.

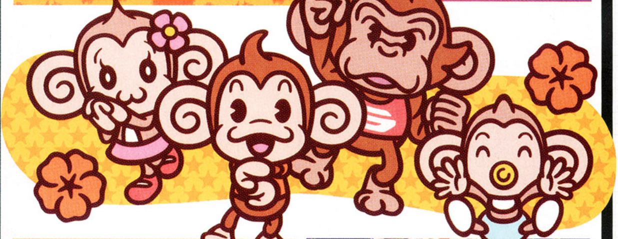
Six party games follow Super Monkey Ball tradition in getting the whole gang together. Up to four players can participate, and three of the games are available for single-card download play. Monkey Race is a run through closed-circuit tracks with Mario Kart-style power-ups that either speed up your ball or slow down your competitors'. The overhead-view Monkey Fight and Monkey Bowling are series favorites operated by touch control for the first time. Golf party games have also been part of the series for some time, but a touch-based swing mechanic adds a new level of control to Monkey Mini Golf. The Monkey Wars game is new to the franchise. It's an FPS in the style of the original Doom, only instead of wielding a chainsaw or a BFG, you toss bananas at your opponents. Also new is Monkey Air Hockey, in which four opponents face off in teams of two.

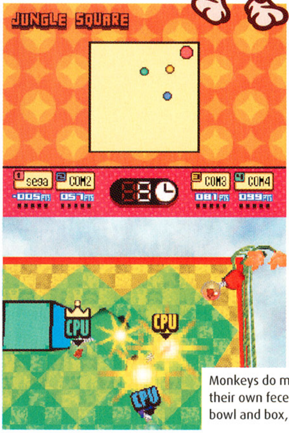
With a pair of GCN titles, the GBA Super Monkey Ball Jr. and now a DS venture on the way, Sega's fun and fuzzy franchise is definitely on a roll.
—George S.

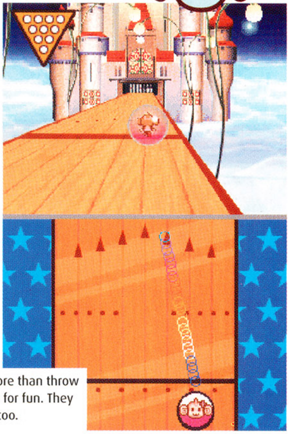












Monkeys do more than throw their own feces for fun. They bowl and box, too.

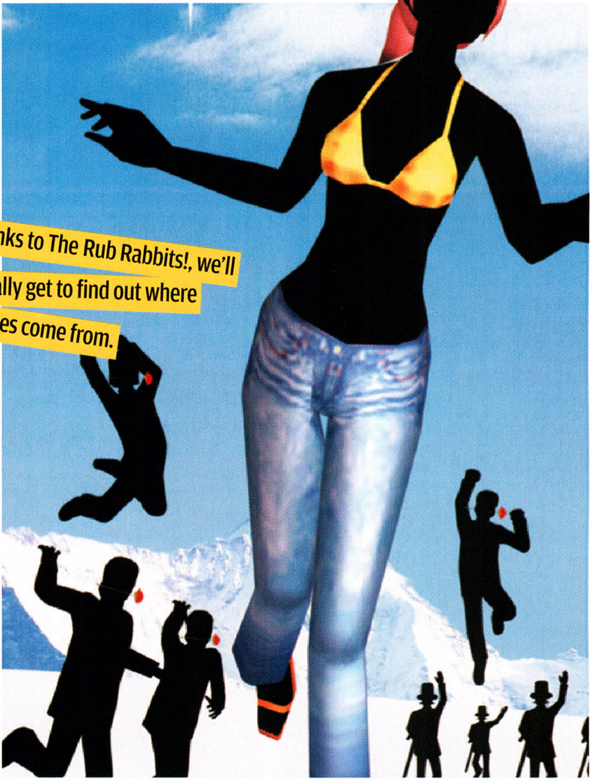
Still Feelin' It

>THE RUB RABBITS!

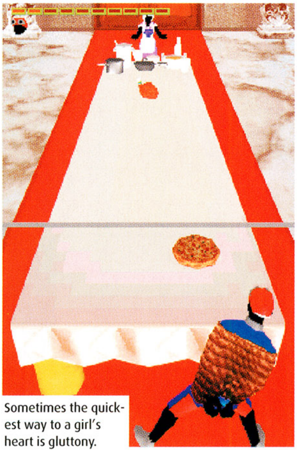
PLATFORM: **DS** • PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SONICTEAM** • RELEASE: **FEBRUARY 2006**

Games just don't come much stranger than The Rub Rabbits! And I mean that in a good way. The sequel to Feel the Magic: XY/XX retains the peculiar charm of its predecessor to offer something completely out of the ordinary. The story is simple: a boy sees the girl of his dreams and tries to win her affections through a collection of downright bizarre minigames. These range from covering her with leaves to protecting his friends from a marauding bear by knocking them out with a shovel and burying them in the snow. Don't worry—it all makes sense within the context of the game's narrative. Wait, no it doesn't. But that's what makes the game so endearing. It's unabashedly silly, yet offers moments of genuine tenderness portrayed through the game's gentle, expressive art style. And as with Feel the Magic, all of the minigames focus on the DS's unique functionality. You'll even have to turn the unit sideways or upside down on occasion.

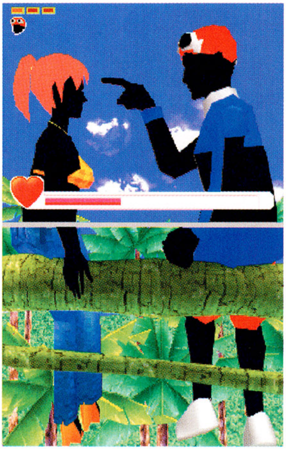
In Japan, The Rub Rabbits! was called Where Do Babies Come From? That intriguing title stems from the game's Baby-Making mode in which you and a "special friend" answer a series of questions and participate in a minigame while both of you hold the DS simultaneously. In doing so, you create a baby unique to the two of you. Maybe you'll find the real love of your life in addition to the virtual one. —STEVE T.

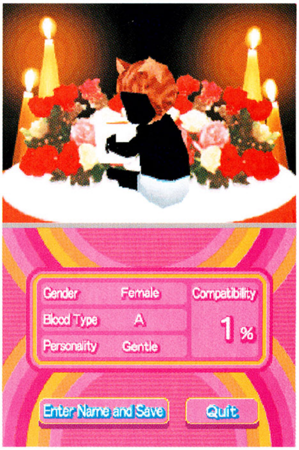


Thanks to The Rub Rabbits!, we'll finally get to find out where babies come from.



Sometimes the quickest way to a girl's heart is gluttony.





Gender	Female	Compatibility
Blood Type	A	1 %
Personality	Gentle	

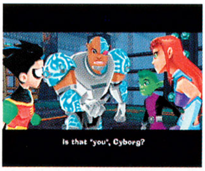
Clash of the Titans

>TEEN TITANS

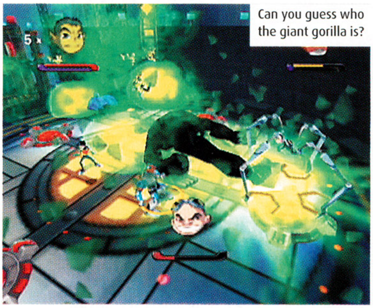
PLATFORM: **GCN** • PUBLISHER: **Majesco Entertainment**
DEVELOPER: **A2M** • RELEASE: **February 2006**

When the Titans get sucked into a mysterious video game, they'll have to fight their way out to survive. We know little more about the plot of the first Teen Titans video game, but we do know that you'll be able to play as Robin, Starfire, Beast Boy, Cyborg, Raven and 24 other unlockable characters in the beat-'em-up action title. Each playable character has a unique fighting style and set of abilities. We spent some time with an early version of the game, and learned that you can switch between your favorite Titans on the fly, or play through levels cooperatively with up to three other players. The game boasts over 15 missions and 13 fighting arenas, and pits you against a slew of classic Teen Titan villains, including Cinderblock, Jinx and Slade. But what will be most exciting for *Teen Titans* fans is how closely the game's look and feel resemble that of the cartoon. Everything from the voice-overs to the animated cut-scenes pays tribute to the Cartoon Network megahit. —Andy M.

There's no such thing as too many.



Even the more timid titans will wreak major havoc.



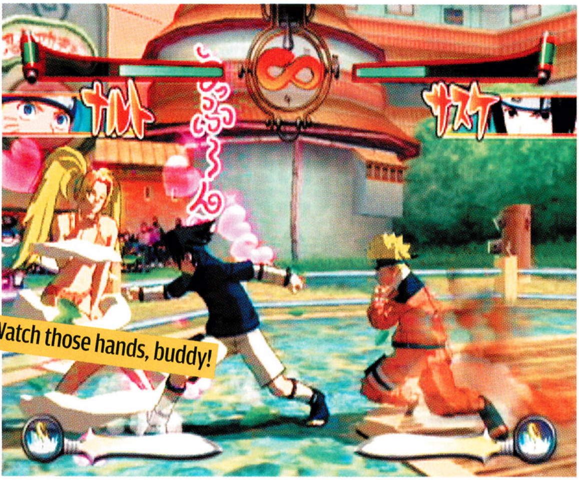
Can you guess who the giant gorilla is?

Martial Arts Mischief

>NARUTO: CLASH OF NINJA

PLATFORM: **GCN** • PUBLISHER: **Tomy/D3PA**
DEVELOPER: **Eighting** • RELEASE: **March 2006**

Ninjas are known for being stealthy and sneaky, but the ninjitsu masters of Naruto: Clash of Ninja are more about head-to-head, in-your face combat. Based on the Naruto anime and manga, Clash of Ninja brings eight combatants—including Sasuke, Sakura and Naruto himself—straight from the series and into the GCN for some 3-D one-on-one action. The game takes the less-is-more approach to fighting; moves are dished out mainly via two buttons—one for strikes and one for special attacks—in conjunction with the control pad. Filling the Chakra meter allows characters to unleash their trademark superpowerful ninja arts, and permits the use of the game's Substitution Jutsu counterattack technique, which lets characters teleport away from an enemy's combo and reappear to deliver a sudden blow. Story, Arcade, Versus, Survival, Training and Time Attack modes are all included to test your ninja skills, and the game features a full voiceover track from the TV show's voice actors. —Chris H.



Watch those hands, buddy!

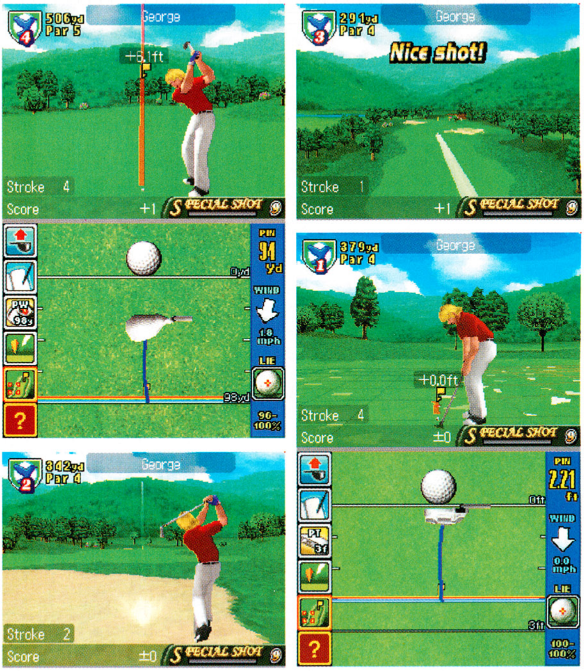
A Slice of Heaven

>TRUE SWING GOLF

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: T&E SOFT • RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2006

Winter is not a great time to visit your local links (unless you're glad that the water hazards are frozen over), but come February, you'll be able to golf wherever and whenver you want to. True Swing Golf, developed by golf-game specialists T&E Soft (Waialae Country Club), offers a touch-controlled swing that turns your stylus into a club. Just pull back then push forward to let the ball fly. The bigger your backswing and the flick of your wrist, the farther the ball will fly.

Seven courses, ranging in difficulty from easy to expert, offer a full slate of realistic golfing challenges. You can visit a single course for match or stroke play or take a multicourse tour in Championship mode. Victories will earn you cash for polo shirts, stylish knickers or shoes, as well as equipment that improves your performance. Single-card and multicard wireless play allows for parties of four or fewer to give True Swing's virtual fairways and greens a go. —GEORGE S.

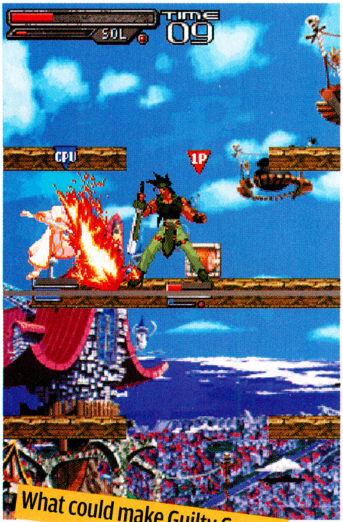

506yd Par 5
George
+5.1ft
Stroke 4
Score +1
SPECIAL SHOT
291yd Par 4
George
Nice shot!
Stroke 1
Score +1
SPECIAL SHOT
PIN 94 yd
WIND 1.8 mph
LIE 96-100%
0yd
98yd
379yd Par 4
George
+0.0ft
Stroke 4
Score ±0
SPECIAL SHOT
342yd Par 4
George
Stroke 2
Score ±0
SPECIAL SHOT
PIN 2.21 ft
WIND 0.0 mph
LIE 100-100%
0ft
3ft
?

Kick Some Butt Rock

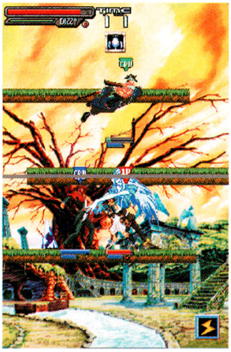
>GUILTY GEAR DUST STRIKERS

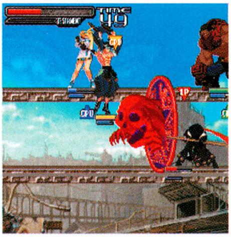
PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: MAJESCO
DEVELOPER: ARC SYSTEM WORKS
RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2006

Heavy Metal meets Street Fighter: that's the Guilty Gear series at a glance. The fighting's as complex as its metal soundtrack. And the roster's a badass blend of sci-fantasy and butt-rock style, including faves like Sol Badguy, a fire-sword-wielding bounty hunter and a fan of the band Queen, and Axl Low, a sickle-swinging time traveler (named after the Guns n' Roses frontman). Twenty-one überweird characters enter the DS's double-tall arenas, the perfect form for GG's upward-thrusting action. Though Dust Strikers is all about the fighting and has two solo modes (Arcade and Story) plus two wireless modes (Versus and Challenge), it also has a freaky range of minigames, like one in which you'll drag hoops for dolphins to leap through. What does Flipper have to do with combat? You'll earn points for upgrading the programmable fighter-bot, Robo-Ky, of course. —STEVEN G.


SOL
TIME 09
CPU
1P

What could make Guilty Gear go completely over the top? Battling into the stratosphere.


DIZZY
TIME 11
CPU
1P


TIME 49
CPU
1P

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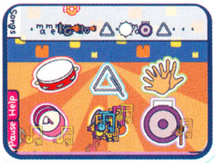
Done
Pause
Help
tooth brush
treat-ment
padding
implant
injec-tion

It's wonderful!



EVERYONE
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NINTENDO DS™

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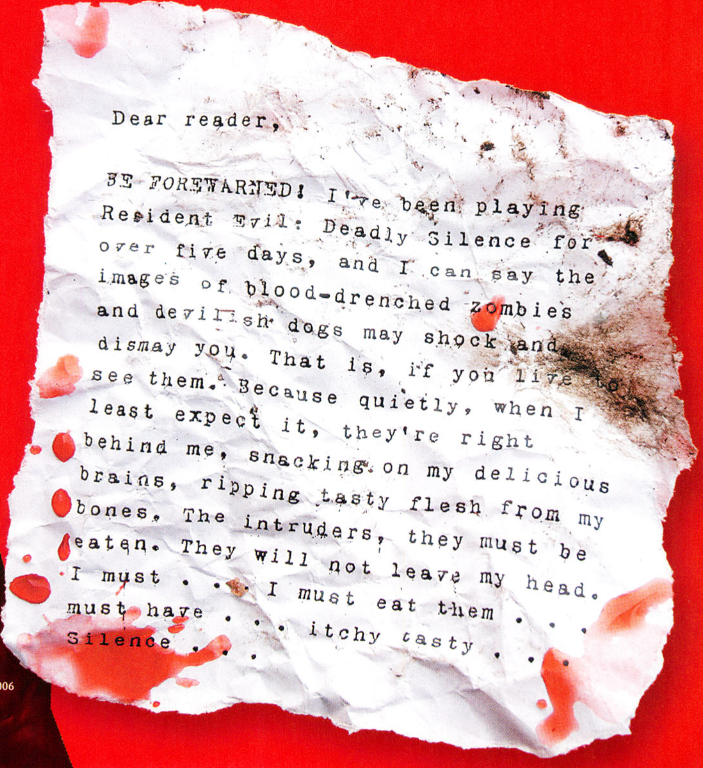
Si

lence Is Deadly

Resident Evil: Deadly Silence hits Nintendo DS's dual screen with new monsters, new treasures and terrors that will make you quake with fear.

By Chris Shepperd



Dear reader,

BE FOREWARNED! I've been playing Resident Evil: Deadly Silence for over five days, and I can say the images of blood-drenched zombies and devilish dogs may shock and dismay you. That is, if you live to see them. Because quietly, when I least expect it, they're right behind me, snacking on my delicious brains, ripping tasty flesh from my bones. The intruders, they must be eaten. They will not leave my head. I must . . . I must eat them . . . must have . . . itchy tasty . . . Silence . . .

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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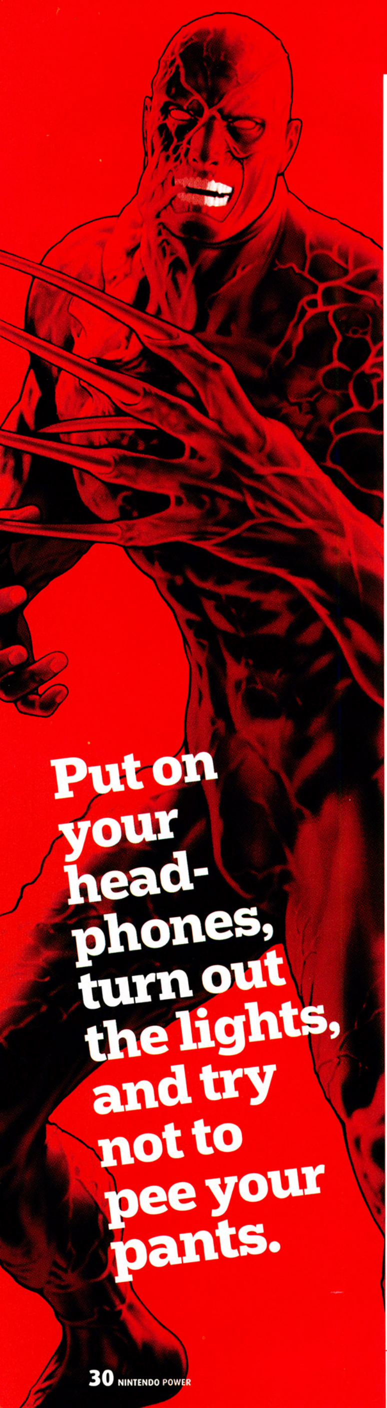


Put on your headphones, turn out the lights, and try not to pee your pants.

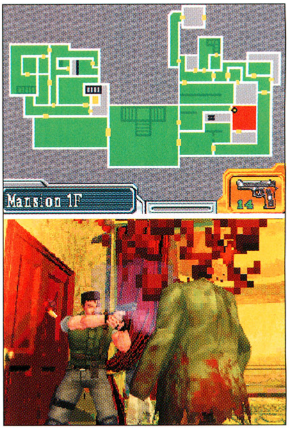
Scenes of Explicit Violence and Gore

Celebrating 10 years of gory Resident Evil goodness, Capcom has unveiled Resident Evil: Deadly Silence for Nintendo DS. Deadly Silence mixes all of the features and frights from the original Resident Evil with the unique functionality of the DS to produce an awesome new experience.

From character design to interior decor to blood splatter, the Resident Evil series has a long history of astonishing imagery. The groundbreaking first PlayStation title wowed gamers with full-motion cut-scenes, then the jaw-dropping remake for the Nintendo GameCube showed the power of the console. More recently, Resident Evil 4 for GCN affirmed that graphic quality remains a central aspect of the series. Deadly Silence (for the DS) is no different. Each room and corridor exhibits loads of exacting detail, such as blood-smeared handprints along the wallpapered halls and dusty desktops from years of neglect. The ghoulish zombies and dogs have also made a solid transition to the smaller screen—the first-person knife mode, in particular, shows off the gruesome detail of the enemies.

Along with the commitment to highly detailed graphics, Resident Evil purists will be pleased to know that the full-motion video from the original RE game has been faithfully shrunk to fit the DS. The B-movie acting is just as charmingly hokey as it was when it first debuted—Barry, Wesker and the rest of the S.T.A.R.S. crew's stilted dialogue will still delight. All of the character audio has been preserved, as well—the macho grunts of Chris Redfield and the adolescent naivety of Rebecca Chambers provide the right amount of humor, whether intentional or not.

The character-control method of the Resident Evil games has always been a disputed subject; some people consider the unconventional control to be an essential element of the game, while others consider it an inconvenience. Deadly Silence director Minoru Nakai explains, "One of the things that make the game scary and intense is its specific control style." And why not use the touch screen for the bulk of the character movement? "I wanted to focus on using that for other elements, so I did not consider using [the touch screen] for control," Nakai adds. For Deadly Silence, the developers have stood their ground and have kept the control system as it has always been.



There may be a lot new to Deadly Silence, but good ol' fashioned decapitations ain't one of 'em.

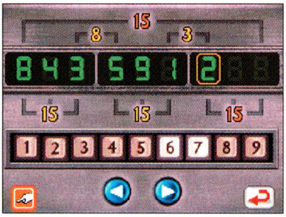
Not all of the controls are the same, however. Taking a cue from Resident Evil 4, the characters now have a survival knife equipped at all times, and the blade no longer takes up a spot in the item list. Using the knife cuts down on ammo consumption, as well as alleviates the need to constantly manage your inventory. The change doesn't make the game easier necessarily, but it gets rid of a lot of the backtracking that plagued the previous versions.

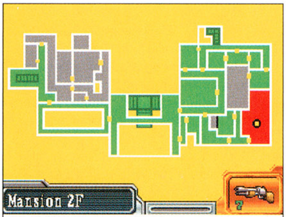
No! Don't go!

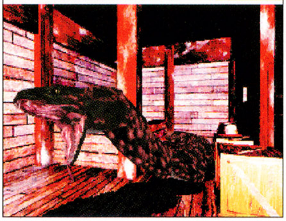
I'm a newcomer. I just joined the S.T.A.R.S. Bravo Team last month.

Classic scenes from the original Resident Evil have been shrunk to fit the DS, but nothing could reduce the awesomeness of Rebecca's naivety.

Evil to the Touch



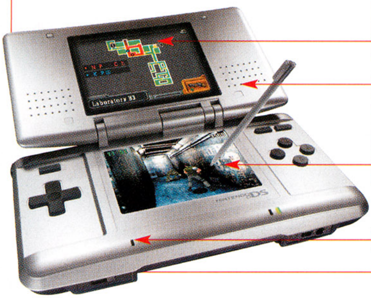




While at its core Deadly Silence does not change many things from the 1996 Resident Evil title, the myriad unique aspects of the DS offer a variety of ways to teach an old zombie dog new tricks. In fact, Nakai estimates that about only about 40 percent of Deadly Silence is from the original version; everything else has been built from scratch. So much of the gameplay has been revamped to take advantage of the hardware that people familiar with the classic version will be, without question, pleasantly surprised. For instance, before, after you'd cleared out a room or hallway of all the enemies, when you returned to that location later in the game monsters would occasionally reappear. Now when you revisit an area, there is a chance you'll come face-to-face with an onrush of zombies and killer hounds. The screen will change to a first-person perspective and, armed with only your knife, you'll have to fend off all of the enemies before you can proceed. To hack at the foes, you'll swipe and tap the touch screen, and the knife in your hand will follow your motions as you slash and jab through the oncoming horde with spine-chilling realism.

But there's more to the touch screen than just the new fighting scenes. When zombies wrap you in their clutches, the only way to shake them loose is to quickly scribble back and forth on the touch screen. The undead will often stumble back long enough for you to regain the advantage with your knife or gun. Many new puzzles in the game rely on touch-screen interaction, as well, such as touch-pad door locks and intricate security devices on treasure chests. A number of devices around the manor also require the use of the touch screen, such as rotating hands on a grandfather clock or turning a valve to drain water from a flooding room. The amount of effort that has gone toward taking advantage of the touch screen is impressive.

The extra real estate provided by the DS's second screen is a blessing: it hosts a persistent map. For



- **Persistent map**
- **Weapon display**
- **Multiplayer character tracking**

- **Full Stereo Sound**

- **Knife-battle in 1st-person perspective**
- **Interact with objects**
- **Lockpick treasure chests**
- **Shake off Zombies**

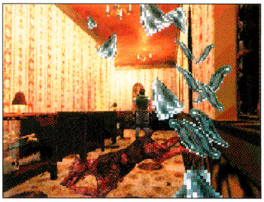
- **Resuscitate teammates**

FEAR FACTOR

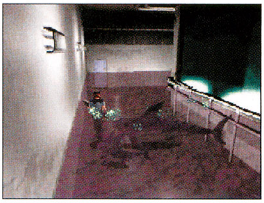
RESIDENT EVIL'S TOP SCARIEST MOMENTS

Deadly Silence marks a decade of classic Resident Evil frights.

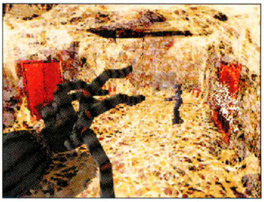
Gamers have delighted in Resident Evil scaring the pants off them for a long time. Check out some of the classic scenes from the game that defined the survival-horror genre.



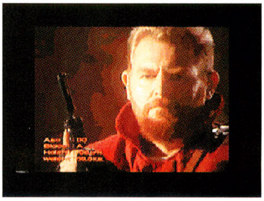
The first time the dog jumps through the window could be the scariest moment in history.



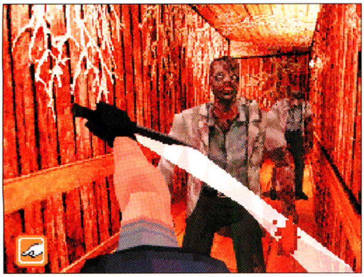
When the giant shark gets a hold of you, good luck shaking him loose.



If you didn't have arachnophobia before, you did after meeting this grotesque beast.

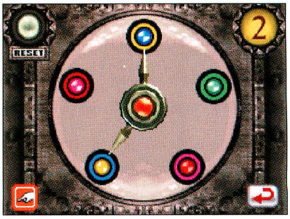


Nothing says fear like the classic cheesy voice acting of Resident Evil cult hero Barry Burton.

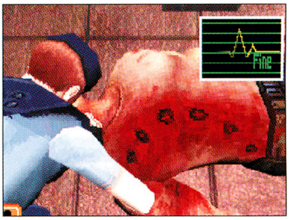


gamers experiencing Resident Evil for the first time, this might not sound like a big deal, but for those of us who have fumbled our way onto the map screen time after time, the always-up diagram of the mansion and its surroundings is a godsend. The color of the rooms identifies where you have and haven't been, and a small indicator shows where you are. Much like the persistent map in Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow, there's nothing flashy about the display—it does what it does in the simplest way possible. Also like Dawn of Sorrow, once you've completed a game with the map, you can't imagine how you ever lived without it. The upper-screen map will automatically jump to whatever area you're in, but there's also a pause-screen map if you want to investigate rooms in another part of the compound.

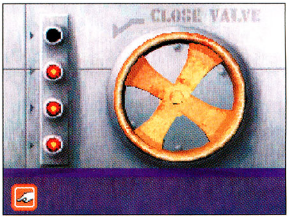
Even the DS's built-in microphone has found a home in Deadly Silence. By blowing into the microphone in time with an onscreen prompt, you can have Jill revive her fallen teammate at a critical point in the story (the scene doesn't take place when playing as Chris). Other uses for the microphone are still under wraps—more details will be revealed as the game release approaches.



The intricate locks on the treasure chests require some forward thinking. Use the touch screen to spin the hands and match the colors to claim the goods.



The poor fellow doesn't have a long time to live, but you need answers—do what you can to bring him back and find out what you can.



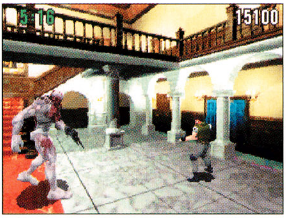
Sometimes the touch screen can take the place of a little elbow grease. Crank closed the rusty valve before the room fills with toxic water.

Campaigns of Terror

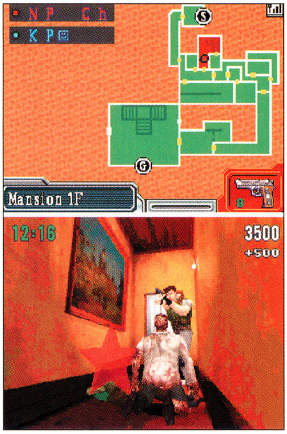
One of the biggest new additions to the classic title is multiplayer play. Deadly Silence marks the first time in Resident Evil history that the primary game series has featured a multiplayer aspect. To compete wirelessly, every player has to have his own copy of Deadly Silence, and up to four players can participate simultaneously.

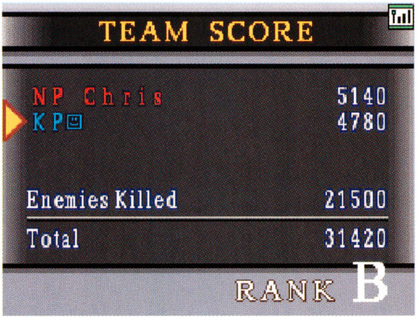
The term Vs. mode conjures up images of a free-for-all death match in which players try to hunt each other down. But in a game where all (or at least most) of the characters are fighting for the same side, it would be weird to pit them against each other in a multiplayer melee. Deadly Silence's Vs. mode works more like a footrace than a multiplayer showdown—all the characters must navigate through the same map, defeat the same number of monsters, and (for the most part) find the same items. They can see the locations of the other players to keep track of their progress, but they can't interact with them directly. There are even locked doors on the map that each character must open with the key he found individually. But even in Resident Evil, no man is an island: As you make your way through the winding corridors of one of the three multiplayer arenas, you'll come across specially tinted enemies. When you defeat them, bad things happen to your opponents—for example, when you kill purple beasts, the other players will be unable to run temporarily. Also, a number of treasure boxes are first come, first serve—if you get to them after someone has raided the cache, you're out of luck. Even though you're not going head-to-head with the other players, the action can be fast and vicious.

Cooperative mode behaves much like Vs. mode—the participants act mostly independently. But instead of everyone competing against each other, each person's performance benefits the other players equally. All of the allies share one life meter, so if one person takes damage, everyone takes damage. The enemies all share a single large store of health, as well, so if one player goes gung-ho and clears out a room, it will be empty for the next people to enter it. To encourage you to work alongside your teammates, you earn a damage bonus whenever everyone is in the same room at the same time. At the end of the stage, the group receives an overall score that reflects how many enemies were killed, as well as how long it took each player to complete the mission. Deadly Silence offers both gamers new to the Resident Evil series and veterans of the venerable franchise plenty of amazing new aspects to sink their teeth into.



At the end of a multiplayer mission (either Vs. or Cooperative), be ready to fight one of the gruesome and deadly monsters from the main story.





TEAM SCORE

NP Chris 5140
KP 4780

Enemies Killed 21500

Total 31420

RANK B

At the end of the multiplayer campaign, players get a score based on their performance. That score is then added to the total number of enemies defeated to determine an overall rank.

When you see this guy for the first time, try not to jump through a window.

INSIDE ZELDA

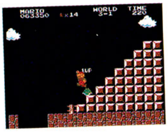
NINTENDO POWER'S MONTHLY CHECK-IN FROM THE ZELDA DEVELOPMENT TEAM.

(Part 9)

LIVING THE CODE OF HONOR

KAZUAKI MORITA | NINTENDO | KYOTO

The Inside Zelda series has touched on aspects of Twilight Princess that you can see, hear and play. But there's a force that holds every one of the creative staff's contributions together—and that's programming. It's like air: a game simply couldn't exist without it. Game designers, graphic designers and all the others who envision a game work with the programming wizards who put it into beautiful motion. We have Nintendo's veteran programmer, Kazuaki Morita, to thank for bringing countless titles to life, and he's been with The Legend of Zelda series from the very beginning. As he explains the art of programming in a way you've never heard before, Morita shares stories about some of the Zelda whoppers he's pulled out of the water over the last 20 years.



Remember the "unlimited Mario" trick that was unintentionally programmed into Super Mario Bros.? Morita definitely does.

Starfox 64 was Morita's first 3-D project, which made his leap from 2-D easier, given the game's focus on vehicles, not characters.

DECODING THE PROGRAMMER

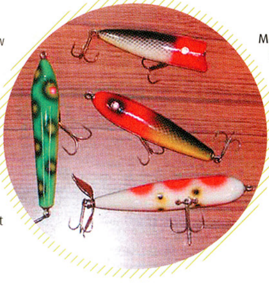
The programming behind Nintendo's games, and my own approach to it, has changed vastly since the mid 1980s. The first game that I programmed, Ice Climber, was my warm-up on the NES, then I dove into the fascinating task of working on the code for Super Mario Bros. And I had a real scare related to that project, which really taught me the importance of flawless code. Ever hear of the "unlimited Mario" cheat? The exact way to do it is a little complicated, but it involved the player setting up a scenario that allows Mario to bounce up and down on the same Koopa shell again and again and again. Points go up and up, leading to a steady flow of 1-Ups. I remember when we first heard about that cheat. We got a phone call from some kid, and Mr. Miyamoto and I both thought the call was a hoax—that such a thing was impossible! The programming was perfect . . . wasn't it? Well, we verified that the cheat worked. Fortunately, *very* fortunately, the "unlimited Mario" cheat had a ton of PR value as word spread, because I sweated bullets over what might happen!

My humble beginnings in programming go way back before Ice Climber. When I was young, there was no school—at least, that I knew of then—where I could study computer programming. So I taught myself everything. In life, you never know what things from your past will turn out to be highly influential as you mature. I was excellent at basic math, but not good at highly conceptual abstract mathematics. That aptitude for concrete math probably guided my hand toward programming, which is all about making *real* stuff happen. And I also liked crafting things like action figures and (here's where a childhood fascination truly helped make history) fishing lures, since I also loved fishing. Maybe you can guess where I'm going with that, but I'll get back to the water later.

When Nintendo made its shift from the Super NES to the Nintendo 64, I needed to forget absolutely everything that I'd learned to make the jump from 2-D to 3-D programming. That's easier said than done! Star Fox 64 was my first 3-D project. Lucky for me that Star Fox 64 was primarily about nonhuman objects like space fighters and tanks. It was a great opportunity for me to sink my teeth into 3-D programming, since I could learn a new way of thinking without tackling the far greater challenge of programming human characters, which would come soon enough for me after that!

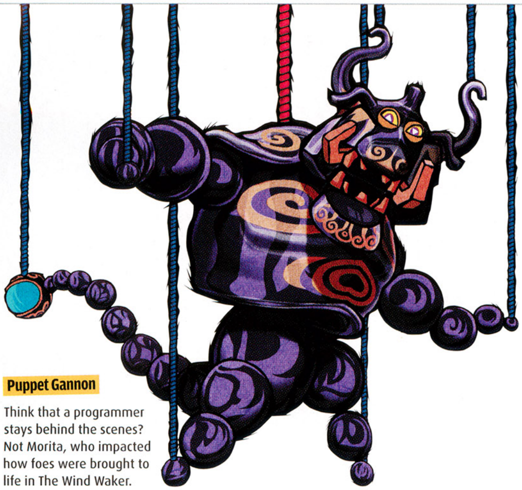
But maybe I've gotten ahead of myself. Many people know that the programmer does *programming*, but what exactly does that mean? And how does the programmer work with a team of creative people, like the director, character designer, sound designer and so on? Well, a programmer's job is to program the ideas and designs created by the game's designers. In other words, it's our job to follow the blueprint laid down by the designers and actually build the building. Does that help?

Exactly how we do that has changed over the years at Nintendo. In the NES era, the



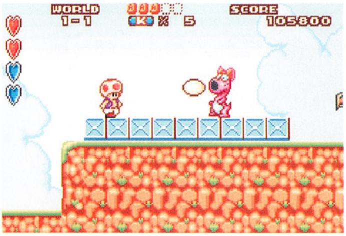
Morita brings unusual influences to his role at Nintendo, such as his interest in crafting fishing lures. How could that get a hook into his programming? Read on!

Since I was very focused on enemy programming in Wind Waker, I found a few ways to bring Puppet Ganon to life with just the right pinch of this and that!



Puppet Gannon

Think that a programmer stays behind the scenes? Not Morita, who impacted how foes were brought to life in The Wind Waker.



Working on Doki Doki Panic, the basis for Super Mario Bros. 2 (Super Mario USA in Japan), strongly affected Morita's methods.

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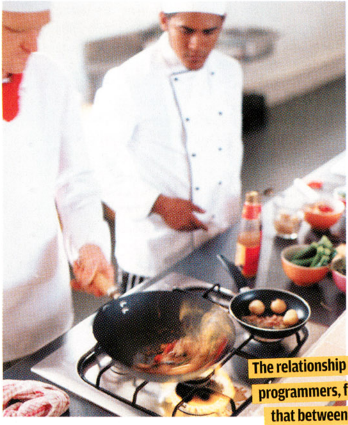
designer and programmer would sit side by side, constantly discussing what the game design should be, and the programmer would actually try to program the design right there on the spot while the designer watched. Talk about flying by the seat of your pants! But these days, since projects are exponentially larger than back then, each creative team is much larger, and each job on a project requires many different people doing many different specialized tasks. Very different. These days, there's no one way to go about programming. It really depends on the project.

The relationship between designers and programmers, figuratively speaking, is much like that between cooking ingredients and a cook. Designers supply the main ingredients; the programmers combine it into one dish, doing some seasoning along the way and then—voilà!—adding just that perfect final touch to make it all come together! In some cases, ingredients might already have a lot of seasoning before they get sent to the kitchen. In which case, the cook has to work even harder to preserve the special feeling of the ingredient, yet still make sure that it plays nicely with the other ingredients to make a superb dish. But each project involves a different amount of respecting the creative preseasoning and doing program seasoning. For example, when we programmed The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, most elements of the game were already seasoned to an excellent level when they were delivered to us. On the other hand, a few things in Wind Waker—do you remember Puppet Ganon, the marionette creature in Ganon's Tower?—were seasoned heavily during programming. Since I was very focused on enemy programming in Wind Waker, I found a few ways to bring Puppet Ganon to life with just the right pinch of this and that!



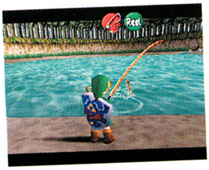
The relationship between designers and programmers, figuratively speaking, is much like that between cooking ingredients and a cook.

LEAPS AND BOUNDS IN PROGRAMMING

Designers and programmers are collaborating heavily on the Twilight Princess project. We had many early discussions, and we continue to evolve our approach. While this title has been called "the realistic Zelda" by some fans, it isn't only striving for visual realism. Realism is trendy in the industry, but Twilight Princess has far greater ambitions than to simply be known as realistic. Though I can't discuss new details, from a programmer's perspective, I can shed light on a few things. As you know, the game does involve a light world and a dark world. Because we are doing so many surprising new things, there's lots of room for us programmers to get in there and preserve the distinct flavor of each world while experimenting a lot with the final seasoning. Oh, it pains me to tell you nothing more specific! But, believe me, what you'll see will be unlike anything you've ever tasted in gaming. Well, here's something I can say: As I continue to help the most unbelievable images come to life in the game, I keep seeing the data size grow enormously. It's one extraordinarily huge game from a programming perspective!

Speaking of other groundbreaking projects, I still fondly recall how games like Doki Doki Panic—the foundation for Super Mario Bros. 2 in North America—really stimulated my imagination as a programmer. That game was released for the Famicon Disk System in Japan, which—back in the day—was a truly fascinating system from a programming point of view. Of course, disk systems are common now, but then we were just exploring how the disk worked as an immense memory reservoir, which let me toy with many programming methods that I couldn't do with ROM. Working with my design partner, and getting very little guidance from others, we developed Doki Doki Panic in ways that really pushed my skills. I really

It's no coincidence that fishing has become a big part of Zelda games.



Morita's secret project became one of the most beloved parts of Ocarina: the fishing pool.

The veteran Nintendo programmer still pursues his lifelong fishing obsession inside and outside the Zelda universe.

matured as a programmer during that time. Very interesting work.

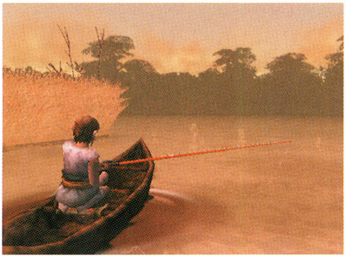
FISHING FOR ZELDA HISTORY

Now here's something from gaming history you probably don't know. Right after I finished work on Super Mario Bros. for the NES, I dove right into development of the very first Legend of Zelda game. Some of Mr. Miyamoto's early direction explored some features of the game using a microphone to do things like beating enemies by making sounds into the mic. Though we ultimately didn't employ mic control in the game, working with the possibility opened my mind. The programming itself wasn't a huge challenge, since the sound system was already in the hardware specs, but what blew my mind was how Mr. Miyamoto thought up such innovative ideas so effortlessly.

Here's something else from gaming history you don't know. Ocarina of Time was an unforgettable project for everyone involved, of course. But one of my biggest memories—oh, I really shouldn't say anything about this!—was how I developed alopecia aerate near the end of the project. That is, I lost big chunks of my hair! I've always been the kind of guy who thinks that work should be fun. I never feel stress, so I thought. My hair told me differently, since the stress condition made more and more hair fall off my head every day. I tried to cover it up by wearing a cap, but that stressed me out even more. After a while, I simply decided not to worry about my hair falling out. And, just that easy, it stopped happening. How many people have *that* kind of memory about Ocarina?

Now I promised that I would talk about fishing. Like I said before, I loved fishing as a kid and it remains my favorite hobby today. It's no coincidence that fishing has become a big part of Zelda games. Recall the fishing zone in Ocarina? That was a programming project that I worked on secretly behind the scenes and surprised the development team with. Fortunately, they really liked it, so the fishing zone made it into the game! Actually, there are several people on our team that like fishing as much as I do, and we get away once each year for a big fishing camp. No surprise, then, that Nintendo has previously said that fishing gameplay will return in Twilight Princess. Of course, the first Zelda game that featured fishing was Link's Awakening on the Game Boy. That happened during a short period of downtime after the massive Link to the Past project ended in the early '90s. I wanted to learn how to program for the Game Boy, and did a lot of experiments. Once I started, I discovered that Game Boy programming was quite sophisticated, yet very accessible. Far beyond our original expectations, we did so many wonderful things with our experiments that we decided to reconceive it all as part of a Zelda game for the Game Boy.

Looking back, I'm very fortunate to have been one of the main programmers working on almost every game in the Zelda series since it first began, since my programming has helped make Zelda such a part of history. Now it's interesting to see how things have changed. While I used to do all of the programming for NES games, now I supervise a whole programming team, though I still do code myself, too, since I believe that staying very close to the art of programming is extremely important. Sometimes I feel myself thinking—when I see what some of the newer faces around Nintendo are conceiving—that such-and-such concept isn't true Zelda! Listen to me! I have 20 years of experience here! But, really, having the fresh thoughts of young talents working on Twilight Princess has really opened my eyes, and that makes me remember those first days working with Mr. Miyamoto on the first Zelda. It's always essential to keep your mind open and learn from new ideas. I've known Mr. Miyamoto for many, many years. It's fascinating to watch him work now. On the surface, he looks like a perfectly pleasant middle-aged guy. But watch him make decisions! His words are extremely precise. His explanations carry a lot of weight. I never fail to be impressed by how he helps people grow and learn about game development. Which brings us back to Twilight Princess. As I prepare to cook in the kitchen, I'm seeing extraordinary ingredients coming my way. If our programming can bring all of these flavors together, and with our help also add a touch of light-world zest and dark-world grit as needed, you can bet that Twilight Princess will be the kind of memorable dish that will live up to the entire history of Zelda.



Teaser screenshots of Twilight Princess have revealed that Link's talent for fishing remains a part of gameplay.

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New brighter screen.

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MONEY POWER FAME

Will your personality allow you to get rich? Or richer?

Do you ♥ money? If you want to be filthy rich in Animal Crossing: Wild World, search your soul before reading on. Which tactics are you willing to exploit?

By Steven Grimm

Let's get one thing straight: ACWW is not just about making money. But it does make life a lot more interesting. At least half of all Animal Crossing fans probably don't agree with that, since many people play AC to express themselves or chat with animals. But even they know deep down that cash (known as bells) is handy. Those who do plan to shop 'til they drop—a huge part of AC life—need a lot of it. And NP's tactics can make you far wealthier. The question is, will you make bells? Or mega-bells? Your personal ambition will determine all. . . .

Joe Homebody

Every ACWW player starts life staying close to home. There's a lot of money to be made around town for players who want to be a big fish in a small pond.

Glad-Hander

If you can't wait to meet players in other towns via LAN and Wi-Fi travel, we can't blame you. Making friends and making profit are the same thing!

Royal Pain

Is status important to you? Nothing makes a playa look like he's worth a fortune faster than status symbols, like a ton of gold stuff and a mansion fit for royalty!

Pillaging Pirate

Being aggressive as you hit distant towns and encounter other players won't make you any friends—but it can make you so wealthy you'll never miss 'em.

The Pharaoh

How will the richest players in ACWW live their lives? Money equals power: the mad power to pay other players to bring the whole world to your doorstep.

©2005 Nintendo

Joe Homebody Works the Town

Everyone starts low on dough, but you'll reap major bells if you're savvy.

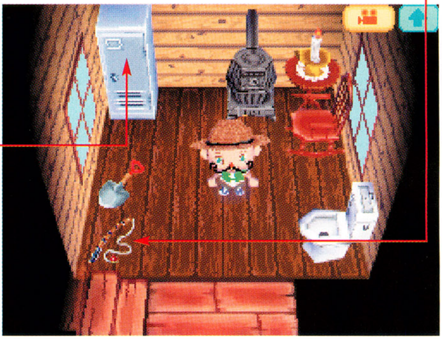
When you move to your town, you'll have almost nothing. Tiny house. No possessions worth much. Few opportunities for making money. But if you avoid short-term gratification during your first weeks and focus on long-term investment instead (a dull term for The Plan for Becoming the Richest Person in the World), you can build a stockpile of bells in a surprisingly short time. Amass a small fortune now to own the world later!

Humble Home for Now

Early in your AC life, blow off your mortgage. Though not paying it off means that your house won't be expanded, you can avoid a cramped pad by buying the first kind of storage furniture that goes on sale—it will hold 90 items!

No Cool Stuff—Just Ways to Make Cold, Hard Cash

Starting on day one, invest cash in any moneymaking opp that stares you in the face. That means buying tools like the shovel and fishing rod—ASAP.

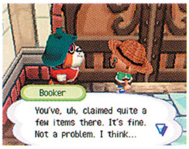


Don't Splurge—Strategize!

Tom Nook puts only a few fresh things on his retail floor each day, but resist instant gratification even though you know he probably won't show that awesome stereo again for months. At least resist the urge during the first week of daily play. Instead, focus on activities that lead to big wealth at the fastest pace.

1 Shake Down Your Town—Then Do It Again!

Exploit your town's free sources of riches frequently. Shake every tree daily and scour the shore for shells. Also, check in with gatekeeper Booker and look in the town's recycling bin often to get discarded stuff. Nook will buy most of the things you find.



Booker

You've, uh, claimed quite a few items there. It's fine. Not a problem. I think...

- **No Shell Is Too Small**

A trip along the shore every few hours can score you a handful of shells. If you're lucky, the bounty may yield over 1,000 bells.

- **Leave No Tree Unshaken**

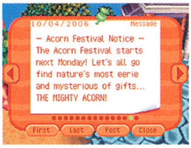
Shake your fruit trees to pocket local fruit, each piece worth 100 bells. Rattle all other trees, too; they may drop cash bags or cool stuff.

2 Exotic Gardening Bears Fruit

Native fruit isn't worth much, but exotic varieties sell for 500 bells. If you find any in other towns or receive any as a gift, don't cash it in. Using a shovel, plant it to grow a more-profitable tree. Then plant the fruit from it, too. Keep up the cycle for several weeks before you start selling.

3 Pounce on Every Special Opportunity

Special days usually result in getting stuff—which, of course, you can sell. Stay abreast of events by checking your mail and the bulletin board daily. Also, you never know when Nintendo might post valuable info via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection (after you turn on this Wi-Fi option by using your home's phone).



10/04/2006 Message

– Acorn Festival Notice –
The Acorn Festival starts next Monday! Let's all go find nature's most eerie and mysterious of gifts... THE MIGHTY ACORN!

4 Can't Scavenge 24/7? Focus Your Catching

If you see an X appear on the ground, dig to unearth an oddity, usually a valuable fossil. Only a few Xs show up each day. Fish and bugs are a *constant* source of profit, and an hour with a rod and net can score you thousands of bells. In time, you'll get a sense of where and when the more-valuable critters show up. Until then, consider these catches.

Red Snappers

Rarer fish are worth more, but the red snapper is one of the most valuable fish (3,000 bells) that shows up often. It's only in the ocean—so fish the shoreline constantly.

Bees

Shaking trees not only produces fruit and surprise stuff—it can scare out angry bees. If you equip your net and swipe with perfect timing, you'll net a bug worth 4,500 bells!

Scratch Nook's Back

Your financial fate is tied to Nook. When you hit key thresholds of buy-and-sell bell totals (in other words, the total of all Nook transactions over time), he'll shut down for a day, then reopen on the next day with an expanded store. That means Nook will sell additional stuff each day! Push yourself to catch enough sellable bugs and fish on your first day to prod Nook into his first expansion—you'll get more tools faster that way.

- **Nook 'n Go:** 25,000 Bells
- **Nookway:** 90,000 Bells
- **Nookington's:** 240,000 Bells*

* In addition to passing the 240K total, you'll also have to ask a wireless player to visit your town's store and buy an item.

Expand Nook's to master of profit: Tom Nook.

The Glad-Hander Palms Big Cash

Going to other towns is fun stuff. And the sales opportunities are boundless.

Whether you travel via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection or DS-to-DS, going to other towns opens up new territory. That means more trees to shake, more ocean to fish and more stores to shop. Most importantly, it means more players—and that's where the money is. They have it. You want it. What don't they have? That gold-plated stereo they've been looking for. If you can find it before they can, you can turn a good friend into a great customer. And turn your home into a superb store.

Mi Casa Es Su Casa

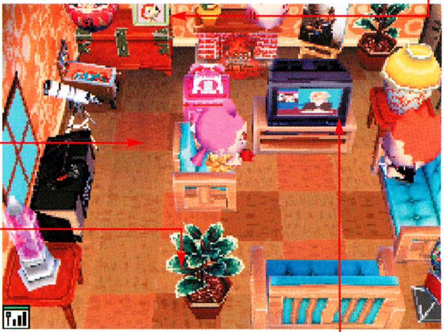
Pay off your mortgage twice to expand your single room to its largest size. Why? You'll need a little elbow room to throw soirees at your pad.

Stuff That Makes 'em Salivate

Think of your house as an inviting place—a place that will help you do better business than Nook. He displays only a few items each day, and maybe one's actually cool. But everything in *your* house is awesome. And for sale!

Interactive Items Make Visiting Fun

Visitors need to think you're a pal, not a shill. Treat your neighbors perfectly to win pics from them. Then display the proof of your popularity!



Happy, Happy, Joy, Joy!

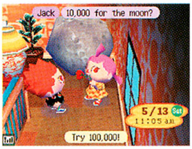
Put interactive things in your home, like pinball tables and TVs, to make your friends drool more. They'll have fonder memories of you—and your stuff!

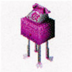
From Sell to Buy

Once you start leaving home, your strategy changes. Don't invest in your town; pour money into stuff. Learn your friends' tastes. As you travel through towns, find them cool things, then offer them at a price far above Nook's. What: too rich for their blood? How long can they stand to wait for Nook to offer it?

1 Rare Stuff Is a Good Investment

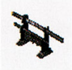
Knowing that your friend needs the cow skull to finish his Western Theme furniture collection makes your job easier. But what if you just want to stockpile stuff to sell to people you might meet? Acquiring then selling rare items, such as the following, will put you in a very good position to make sky-high profits.





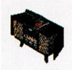
Lovely Phone

Once you leave a town after DS-to-DS travel, you may see a kitten that's lost her mom. Lead her back to the other town and reunite them to get a gift—possibly this rare phone.



Black Katana

Who doesn't like swords? And if you're lucky enough to find one, who wouldn't pay you much more than Nook's asking price of 12,000 bells?



Retro Stereo

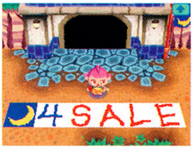
Some items will go on sale in your town but never in other ones. That's how Nook runs things. So finds like the stylish retro stereo may be super-rare outside of your town!

The Moon

Nook will offer rare items through his spotlight sales—a good sign that you should "buy to sell." This is especially true for gems like the moon, maybe the most awesome thing you can buy. For all but the rarest items, once you've owned it you can buy it again from your Personal Catalog at Nook's shop. That means a ready source of moons for all your desperate customers. Cost: 32,000 bells. Moon monopoly: Priceless.

2 Getting the Word Out to Others

Sell yourself. But only in gosh-dern friendly ways, or you'll scare off the rubes–um–customers. When you're chatting, be nice and helpful, not a hard sell. Welcome visiting players with a pleasant note on the town billboard, plus leave patterns on the ground that help them know where to find you . . . and maybe some good deals.



Use Tag to Spread

If you throw a note in a bottle into your river then leave your DS in Tag mode, another Tag-ready DS may grab the bottle. Its owner can read your note—and might get other surprises, too.

Outfoxing Crazy Redd

If there's one salesman you should really study, it's Crazy Redd, who occasionally comes to town with rare, expensive items. Truth be told, some of his items aren't rare, just expensive. What a scam! What a genius! Until you know the diff, buy 'em anyway in the hope that you're adding true rarities to your collection.

Protection from Redd?

Redd has a partner: the insurance guy, Lyle. Don't buy his expensive scam, which barely helps you recover from bad investments at Redd's. (You can avoid it only by not having enough money.) But do speak with him—he'll help you arrange visits with the fox.

The Royal Pain Shows Off

You're wealthy. You're well-connected. And you want people to know it.

For some people, quietly stuffing their bank accounts is just too subtle. They need everyone to know how rich they are. Cue Trump's theme song and cut to shots of flashy (even gaudy!) items in a vast manor. They distance themselves from normal people (and customers) but shoot into the stratosphere, where power players have beaucoup bells to spend.

You're Awesome! You Have Trophies!

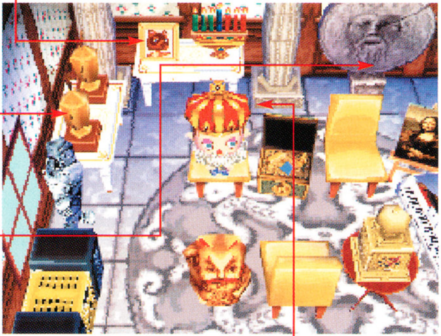
Status symbols help you shine, so grab flashy trophies that prove you're the best: one during the Fishing Tourney (one day each month, eight months per year); one at the Bug-Off (once monthly June through September); and the final one at the Flower Fest (during the second week in April).

Jet-Setting around Your Manor

Decorating with artifacts from foreign cultures makes you so . . . cultural! Rich folks like that. If a UFO ever appears in your sky, that's your ticket for getting such items. Shoot it down with the slingshot, then locate it for a special quest.

VIP = Very Important Pics

Don't display pics that regular animals give out. They're nobodies! Show off VIP pics that are nearly impossible to get: Nook's, Pascal's and K.K. Slider's.



Make the Rabble Feel Inferior

It's the priciest item in ACWW: the royal crown. Believe it or not, the Able Sisters shop sells it once in a blue moon. The price tag: 1.2 million bells!

Tools with Bling Effect

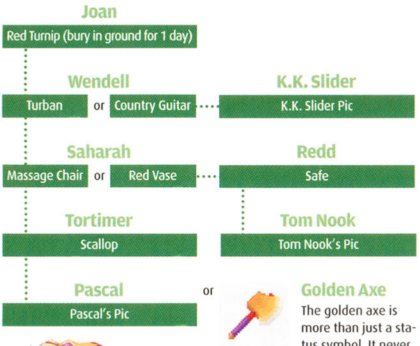
If you want to distance yourself from the masses, don't touch regular tools with a ten-foot pole. (Eww! Ten-foot pole! How common!) Use only gold stuff. Getting it all is tough. Why don't you tell others how to do it, then just buy it off them?

1 The Secret Trading Quest and Its Payoffs

Many of ACWW's scarcest objects are part of a supersecret trading quest that connects VIPs, some of them critters that visit rarely. Study the flow chart to see what each character gives you, and whom you need to give that to as you head toward the final item you seek. Could this stuff be more elite?

Tortimer

Yes, it's a scallop... I found this by the shore earlier. I don't know who dropped it.



Golden Axe

The golden axe is more than just a status symbol. It never breaks, no matter how many trees you hack down. We can't stand players who travel to other towns and cut down all the trees. But we doubt that the rich and famous care what we think.

2 The Long Haul for Three Shiny Tools

If you want the golden versions of the net, rod and slingshot, you'll need patience. Those who earn them win our highest respect, since it takes weeks of devoted play to get the slingshot and likely a year for the other two!

Golden Net

If you catch every kind of insect in ACWW (easier said than done, since many appear only in specific seasons), you'll earn a special, larger net that makes it easier to snag bugs you see.

Golden Rod

Same long-term challenge as the golden net: If you nab each kind of fish, you'll get a rod that reduces the amount of time it takes to pull in a fish on the hook.

Golden Slingshot

If you shoot down 15 floating gift balloons from the sky with your slingshot, then bring down a 16th gift, it will contain a slingshot that fires a three-shot spray into the air.

Trump your friends' equipment by using only the gold tools.

3 Gold Thumb in the Garden

Gardening is one of the great pastimes of the superwealthy. Fortunately, they'll reap more than just gorgeous gardens and healthy orchards for their trouble. They can also earn the golden shovel and golden watering can.

Golden Shovel

Bury a normal shovel, then dig it up a day later to find it transformed! Then bury a bag of cash with it to seed a money tree. Why not plant a whole orchard? A royal garden, indubitably!

Golden Can

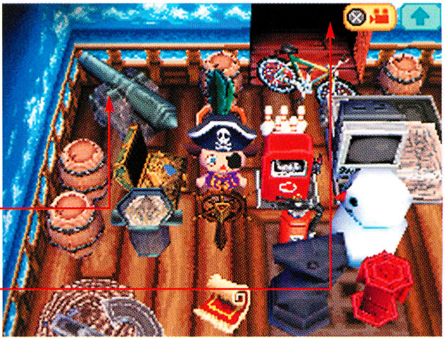
Earning the golden can—though it has no special properties—is far more difficult. You need to maintain a perfect town landscape (weeds pulled, trees nicely spaced, etc.) for 15 days.

We deserve to walk the plank for giving these tips (and warnings).

The Pillaging Pirate—Scurvy Dog!

The siren song of sweet plundering calls to you. Dare you succumb to it?

Would ye dip your pen into yer black heart and write a tale of ill-won fortune? Aye. You're the type who, if something bad happens, you'll reboot your game instead of saving. (Expect serious consequences!) You'll forward your DS clock to make things happen faster. (Expect shocking blemishes!) And you'll raid towns, pulling up your friends' rare flowers and clearing out their stores' inventory! Now that . . . that's actually a good plan.



Home Is Where the Shipwreck Is
Good news for bad-mannered players! If you see a red otter on your shore, hit him up for some sea wisdom—and some pirate-themed furniture.

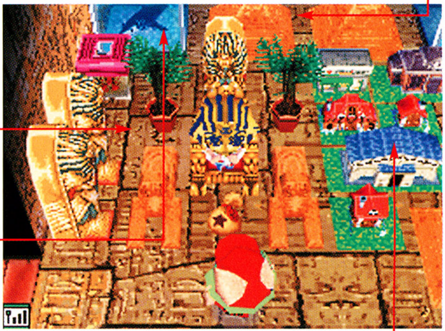
Make Space for Your Booty
You're clearly not keeping friends or customers, so just hoard the stuff you nab. You'll need more rooms—sell a few hundred thousand bells worth.

Pharaoh Lords over the World

It's going to happen. So why shouldn't it be you? But buying influence ain't cheap.

You know you're beyond rich when you can wake up and think, I want to totally redesign my fourth room in the 10-piece Robo Series of furniture, with the Robo carpet and wallpaper to match! But I own not a piece of it. Perhaps if I pay my wireless friend-servant five million bells, I can own the whole shebang by nightfall! Yes, some ACWW players are going to be so rich that other players will be puppets to do their bidding. What fun!

Every Pharaoh Needs a Secret Room
The fifth, final room opens up at the rear of your first one. If you block it off with a big object like a pyramid, nobody but you can move it to enter.



Accounting to a Higher Power: The HRA
The Happy Room Academy scores players on home decor, giving high scores for rooms with same-set furniture and carpets that match the wallpaper. When you're decorating all five huge rooms, the HRA may finally find you worthy.

Expensive Pets
Guests that you allow into your monumental home must be wowed by your caged pets, like supervaluable sharks, tarantulas and scorpions!

Watching Over Your Empire
Install town models to feel larger than life. Put one bell shy of a billion in the bank to get the Town Hall; score 150,000 HRA points for the Mansion Model.

Ring the Dinner Bells

Certain people can smell money from across the country—a great talent to have when playing ACWW over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. And if there's a just reward for those who amass godlike wealth through frugality, savvy investment and smart sales, it's tossing million-bell scraps to those who like a tasty opportunity.

1 People Look to You for Leadership, and, More Importantly, a Paycheck

When your bank account is full to the brim with bells, what's left for an asset-obsessed player? Make up amusing tasks for players. Don't have a creative bone in your body? Find the best designers around and pay them for original designs. Or take your influence far beyond your town, such as in these two examples.

- **Offer Rewards for Ridiculous Quests**
  Want to be like Caesar and spread your name, fame and style across all of ACWW? What will the going rate be for a staff to spread your fame wirelessly?
- **Meddle in World Affairs**
  The real world's wealthiest people have often splurged to support their favorite causes. For bell-ionaires, that could be a holiday in their honor!

2 Money Is Power, and So Is Knowledge

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE FROM NINTENDO DS
Animal Crossing
Wild

When you're aware of all of the furniture, fossils, clothing and thousands of other things to buy in ACWW, you can make better-informed buying-and-selling decisions. You can learn through daily life, but we'd recommend picking up NP's official Animal Crossing: Wild World Player's Guide to give yourself a headstart.

visit www.animal-crossing.com

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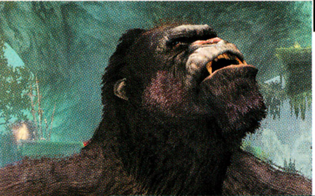
Rex smells what the King is cookin'.

LONG LIVE THE KING KONG

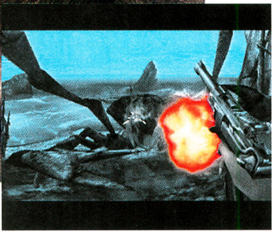
This is not a spoiler: at the conclusion of Peter Jackson's King Kong, the monkey falls to his death. The twist is that by mastering the game, you can save him.

By George Sinfield



It's Not Over 'til It's Over

Ubisoft's adaptation of the holiday season's biggest movie follows mighty monkey Kong all the way to his plunge from the Empire State Building. By completing the game then replaying selected chapters for points, you can unlock a new ending in which the ape survives. But you'll need both mind and muscle power to claim victory on your journey through Skull Island. Clever solutions to conflicts with dinos and other nasty beasts will allow you to save ammo and increase point-scoring opportunities. By reaching completion-percentage milestones and by earning points, you'll unlock extras that include concept art, video options, an interview with Peter Jackson and the ultimate ending. Our strategies get you through the game's most difficult chapters and provide point-earning advice that will help the ape escape from New York and return to Skull Island.



TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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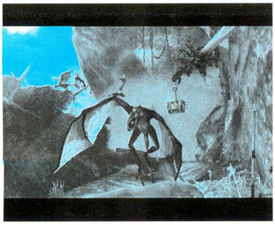
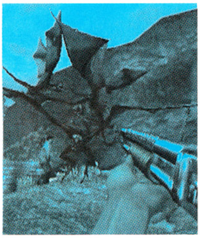
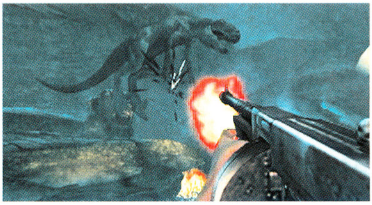
On Kong's Tracks



After Kong shows up, the challenge increases. On your way to save Carl Denham from the large bat, wait by a pile of bones and defeat five raptors as they come. Attack the smaller bats with spears and bones (taking the sticks from the corpses) until you find a shotgun. Fire at the lead bat as it charges, then collect a pistol from an open crate on the plateau and follow Denham to the end of the chapter.

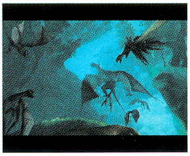


Hayes

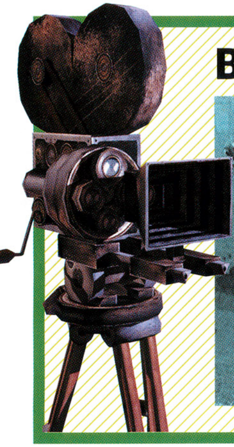


Run to the ruins and use spears and bones to pick off the two big dinos. Collect one lever by distracting spiders with a grub. Collect the other one by burning brush under an arch. When you reach Hayes, spear a fish and use it to lure the two big lizards away from you. Run from one ruin to the next and, when you reach the fire, burn brush to clear the way for Hayes. Grab his machine gun and fire away.

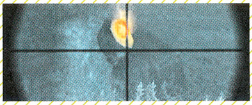
Ann

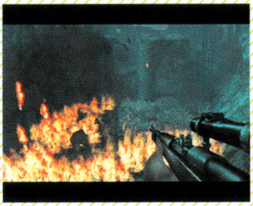


Use fish and spears to keep the raptors away from you while you search for Ann, picking up ammo for your Thompson along the way. When you catch up to Ann, she'll be on a parallel path across a gap. Run side by side with her and defeat the beasts before they can reach her; use spears, then short bursts of the Thompson or a shotgun that you'll find in a crate. When the creatures jump the gap, keep firing.



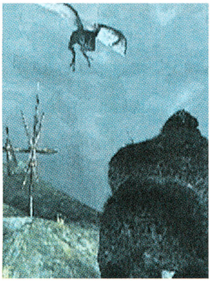
Burn, Beasts, Burn

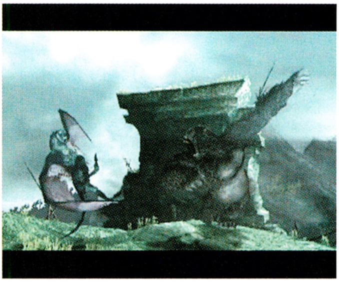




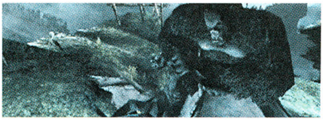
Dry brush, bait and fire are common. Under the right circumstances, you can use all three elements to defeat groups of enemies and conserve weapons. Use a spear to skewer a grub, a fish or a large bug, then throw the stick into the brush—or shoot one of the enemies in the brush. While any enemies in the area rush to claim the prize, grab another spear and use it to light the brush on fire or hit a fire source above the brush. Most creatures caught in the fire will perish. Others may escape, but they'll be out in the open and easy to defeat. In some areas, you can use a firearm to the same effect. Hit an enemy so that it lands in the brush (attracting others to the area), then fire on a torch to make it land in the brush.

Kong

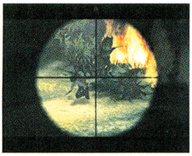


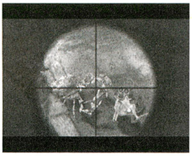


In your first chapter as Kong, you'll chase Ann's captor, a huge bat, by swinging on ledges and branches. When you reach the plateau, shake off the little bats and press Y repeatedly to power up. The bat will attack. Start swinging while it's still a good distance away. It'll take a while for you to bring your fist forward, but when you hit, you'll score a knockout. When the creature is on the ground, press A repeatedly to pull its wings off.

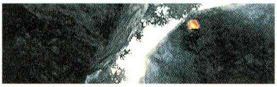


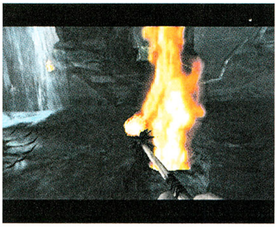
Millipedes



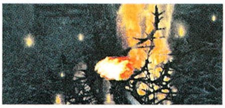


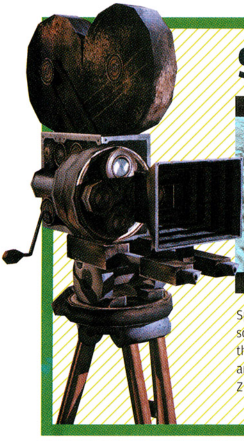
Separated from Denham and Hayes, you'll see your companions on the other side of a gap. Use the sniper rifle to save them from the millipedes. After your friends move on, run along the ledge, grab a spear and duck into an alcove, where you'll find a bait grub. Skewer it and throw the spear down into the gully. After the bats in the area go for the grub, cross the bridge, grab more rifle ammo and look down. Denham and Hayes need your help again.



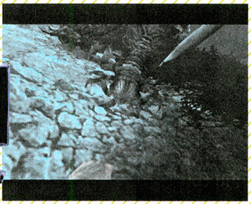


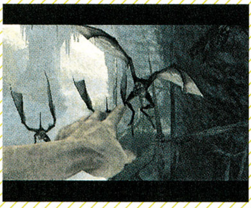
In the caves, you'll pass by two unlit torches. Clear the way of enemies until you meet up with Denham and Hayes at the gate. The gate's missing lever is in the brush—you'll need fire to retrieve it. Return to the first torch and look up to see a fire source. Hit it with a spear to make it fall, lighting the torch. Throw a lit spear through an opening at the next torch. Walk through the waterfall, light another spear and burn the brush.

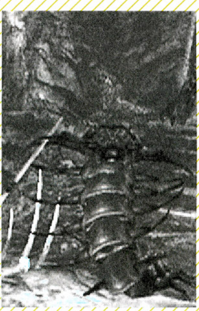




Stick It to Them



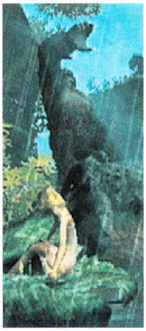




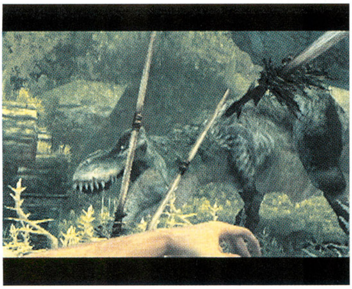
Spears and bones are equally useful. They both cost minimal points against your chapter score and both are flammable. You can defeat many enemies with single spear thrusts to the head. Other foes, such as the larger raptors, can withstand more abuse—but head shots are still the way to go. Wait until they're close before you throw your weapon, and press the Z Button to aid your aim.

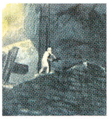
Fight

The chapter begins with Kong facing a V. rex. Set Ann down, press Y repeatedly to power up, then pound the dino, hammering A repeatedly to break its jaw when it's on the ground. Follow Ann and bust through a barrier, swatting away pests or pushing A repeatedly to shake them off. When you reach two V. rexes, power up again and attack the one closer to Ann. If Ann is in danger of being attacked at any time during the fight, drop everything and rush to her, making her pursuer focus on the monkey instead of the woman.



To Save Ann





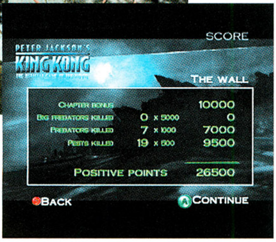
A V. rex is after Ann. Chase the beast, run under its legs and grab a spear from a body. Toss it at the dinosaur to make it chase you instead of Ann. Run into the clearing and grab another spear. Toss it to keep the dinosaur's focus on you. Run around the perimeter of the clearing, grab more spears and try to keep the dinosaur from crashing through the ruins in the middle of the arena; you will need them for cover. When Ann has the gate open, run for it.

Venatosaurus

Run up the stairs at the start of the chapter. Let Hayes have the rifle from the open crate, and grab the shotgun from the hanging crate for yourself. Stay near the ruins and fire on the attackers as soon as you see them, aiming for their heads. Use breaks in the action to reload. When the Venatosaurus appears, focus on it and let Hayes deal with the small creatures. You'll set out with Ann to retrieve fire and a lever. Get Hayes's gun if you're low on ammo.

Survival as a Science

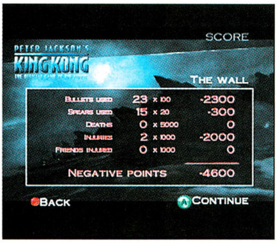
Once you've completed a chapter, you can select it from the main Play menu. Most chapters—the ones that involve Jack Driscoll or Kong battling enemies—offer a score the second time you play through them. The highest score that you earn for a given chapter will contribute to your overall point total and the 250,000 points that you'll need to unlock the alternate ending. The keys to earning points are conserving weapons and keeping the creatures from eating you and your partners. At the end of your run through a point-eligible chapter, you'll receive points for your accomplishments and lose points for making mistakes and using ammunition. The positive points, which include a chapter bonus and a score for every predator or pest that you defeated, are displayed on one screen. The negative points are displayed on the next screen. They include injuries and ammunition used in the chapters in which you control Jack Driscoll, and attacks attempted and time used in the chapters in which you control Kong. If you lose more points than you earn, your overall score for the chapter will be zero.



SCORE

THE WALL

CHAPTER BONUS		10000
BIG PREDATORS KILLED	0 x 5000	0
PREDATORS KILLED	7 x 1000	7000
PESTS KILLED	19 x 500	9500
POSITIVE POINTS		26500

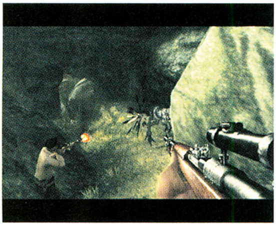


SCORE

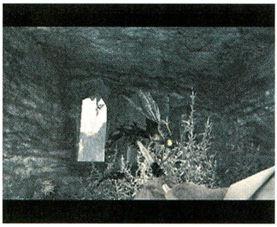
THE WALL

BULLETS USED	23 x 100	-2300
SPEARS USED	15 x 20	-300
DEATHS	0 x 5000	0
INJURIES	2 x 1000	-2000
FRIENDS INJURED	0 x 1000	0
NEGATIVE POINTS		-4600

There's a Wrong Way to Do Things . . .

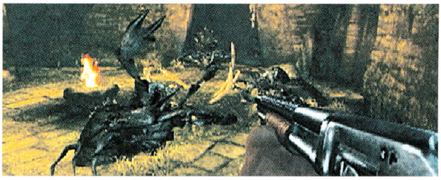


If your partners rush into a battle without you, there's a chance that they'll be injured or defeat some of the enemies before you can get to them (both of which cost you points). Try to be the one who deals the final blow.



The creatures who don't attack you aren't worth shooting. They're bait. Avoid using costly bullets on them. Instead, stick them with a spear then toss the spear to draw all of the enemies in the area to one location. You can then slip past the enemies or defeat them en masse.

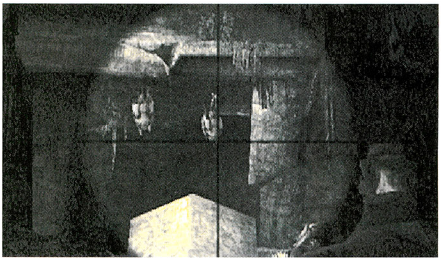
. . . And a Right Way



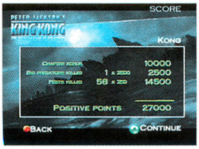
Since spears cost one-fifth as many points as bullets, they should be your primary weapon choice, provided that you can use them without risking injury to yourself or one of your partners. You can reuse spears by picking them up from the ground or out of enemies, but every spear use will count against your point total.

When firing a gun, turn on the aiming visor and the inventory in the Options/Controls menu to make sure that you use every bullet wisely. Aim for the heads of creatures to defeat them in fewer shots, and look for creatures in precarious situations. If you fire on an enemy to knock it over a cliff, you'll get credit for the kill.

The shotgun is the most powerful weapon. One shot can defeat several enemies if you fire into a group, giving you a great scoring differential. When enemies are close to your partners, use bullets rather than spears to defeat them. You'll spend fewer points on bullets than you'll lose if your companions are injured. If you have a sniper rifle, use it to score head shots on unsuspecting bats or dinosaurs from a distance.



Roar and Score

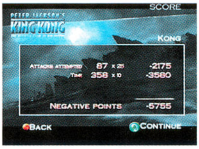


SCORE

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

KONG

CHAPTER SCORE		10000
BIG PREDATORS KILLED	1 x 2500	2500
PESTS KILLED	58 x 250	14500
POSITIVE POINTS		27000



SCORE

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

KONG

ATTACKS ATTEMPTED	87 x 25	-2175
TIME	358 x 10	-3580
NEGATIVE POINTS		-5755

Point schemes are modified when you're playing as Kong. There are only two enemy classifications: big predators and pests. You aren't docked points for injuries or death, but time does work against your score. Every attack also costs points, so press Y repeatedly to power up your monkey, and make every attack count.

Time works against you during the Kong chapters—every tick of the clock costs points. Press and hold the B Button to run fast, and keep moving rather than fighting incidental enemies. When you do have to go up against the little guys, smack groups of them with a single blow or toss them off cliffs.

Explore Skull Island

A slate of 16 extras gives you new ways to experience the world of King Kong. You'll unlock the bulk of the features by progressing through the game and accumulating points. Three of the extras are available via online codes that you'll find at www.kingkonggame.com. While visiting the site, you can also register your high score.

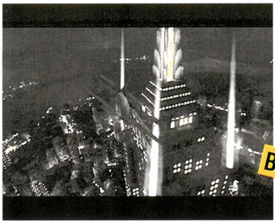
Six of the unlockable extras offer a trip through a museumlike setting where concept art is displayed.

By completing 15% of the game, you'll earn a filter that makes the graphics look like an old movie.

A total score of 75,000 points unlocks an interview with Peter Jackson on how Michel Ancel joined the project.

The (Alternate) End Is Near

By completing the adventure and scoring a total of 250,000 points on additional plays through chapters, you'll unlock the game's alternate ending, a new version of the Empire State Building chapter. In the movie and in the original version of the chapter, Kong fights biplanes until he finally loses his grip and falls to the ground. The alternate ending adds more content, including a biplane dogfight and a new fate for the ape.



After you select the Alternative End extra, climb to the top of the building and swat biplanes, avoiding their shots as much as you can. A successful defense of your position atop the tower will be followed by a scene in which you pilot a biplane as Jack and attempt to save both Kong and Ann. Knock out the four searchlights around the building so the planes will be forced to fly close to Kong, then go after the planes themselves. Once you deplete the forces, you'll be treated to a new end to the story.

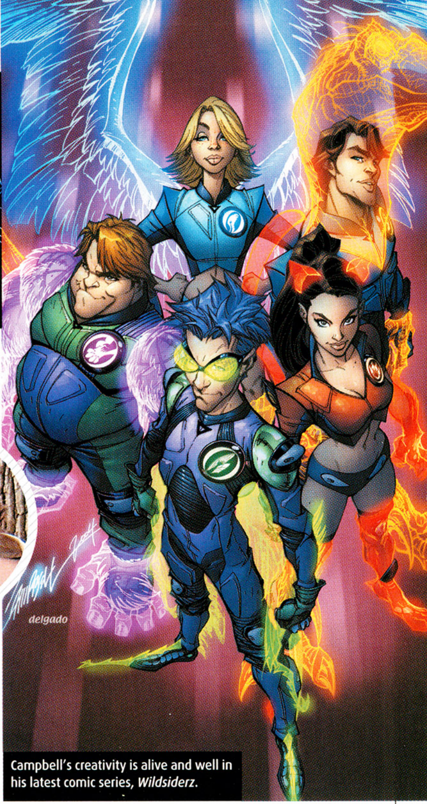
Beautiful play saves the beast.

DRAWN TO NINTENDO

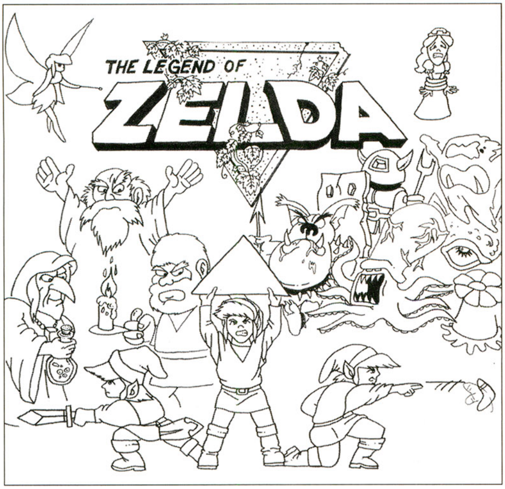
Renowned comic book artist J. Scott Campbell returns to the pages of Nintendo Power.

By Chris Hoffman

When the artwork *of Jeffrey Scott Campbell appeared way back in Volume 6 of Nintendo Power as the winning entry in the Invent the Ultimate Video Game Contest, NP readers and writers alike could tell that the 15-year-old artist had talent. But who would have guessed that the self-professed game addict would go on to become one of the comic book industry's hottest artists? The NP staff thought the 200th issue of Nintendo Power was the perfect opportunity to take things full circle by bringing J. Scott Campbell, as he's now commonly known, back to create a custom-made poster to celebrate the occasion. The images on the following pages chronicle Campbell's career and are joined by the artist's descriptions of his work, his childhood passion for Nintendo and how video games were a major creative influence on his life.*



Campbell's creativity is alive and well in his latest comic series, *Wildsiderz*.

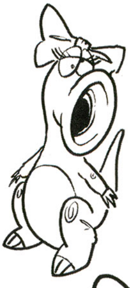


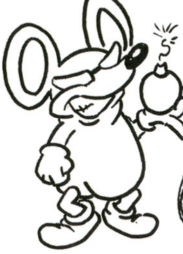
A Link to His Past

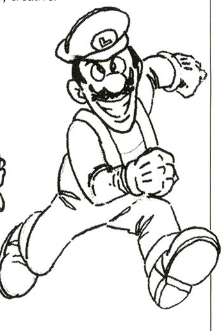
I was totally a video game junkie back [when the Nintendo Entertainment System came out]. Those were the two things I was pretty much into: video games and, of course, my artwork and drawing. They seemed to go easily hand in hand back then, because I just found video games to be really tremendously creative, and it would sort of boost my creativity. I remember getting excited about buying a new video game, not just because of the game, but because, for instance, with The Legend of Zelda, I remember I was so excited to get it and then [see] the little booklet with all the little characters and the villains and everything.

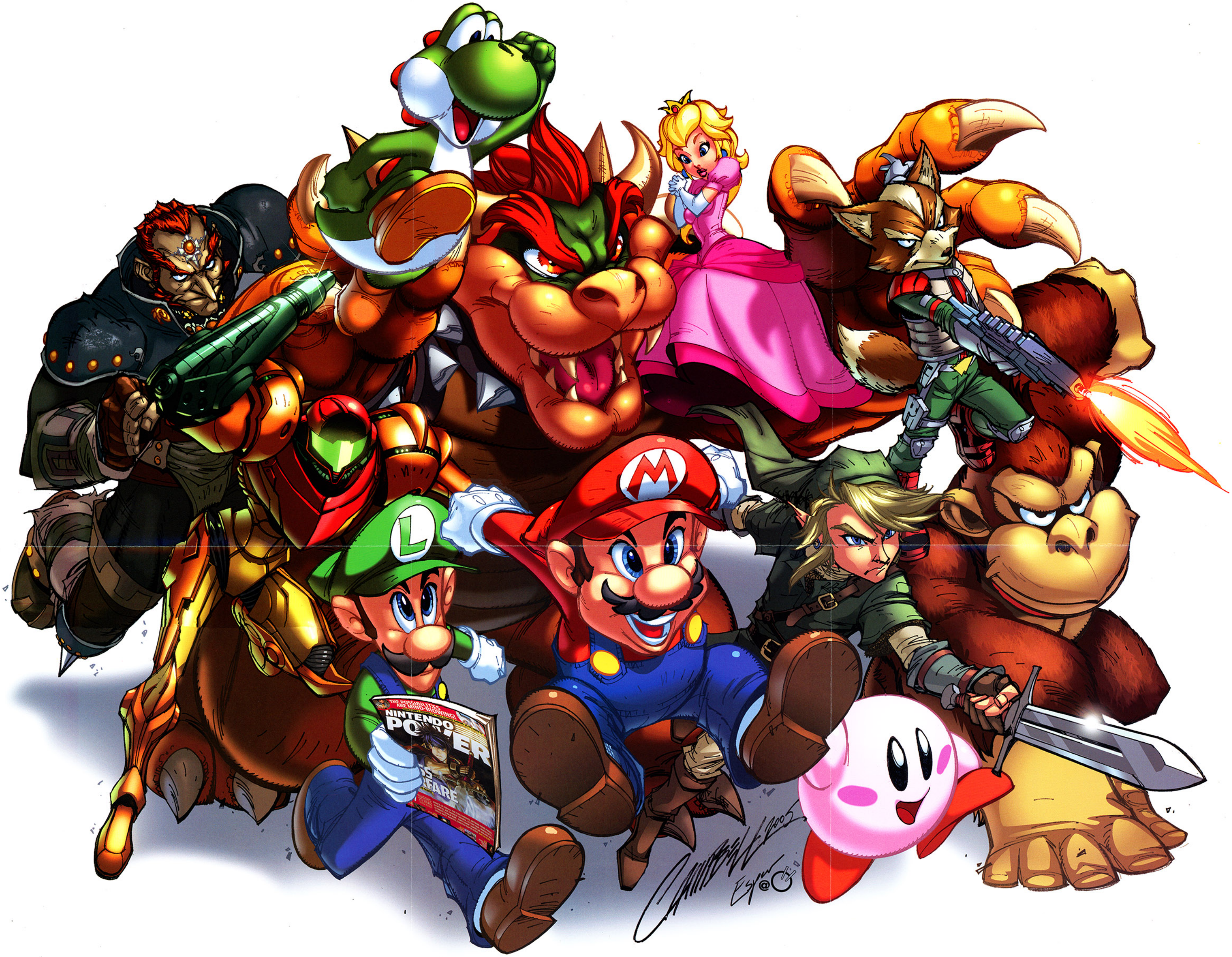
Classically Trained

I think the immense creativity and diversity of so many of the Nintendo games just gave me an inspiration to being very creative and to keep my mind open to all these other directions because so many of the concepts would be so wild. I mean, look at something like Super Mario Bros. It's just such a funky concept. You've got these pipes and these plumbers and these mushrooms. But it's so immensely creative.



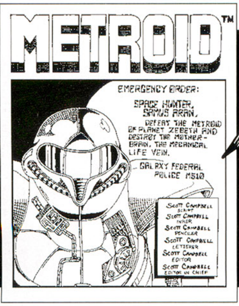


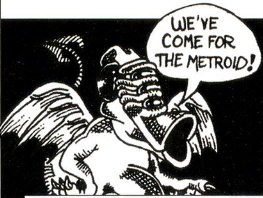


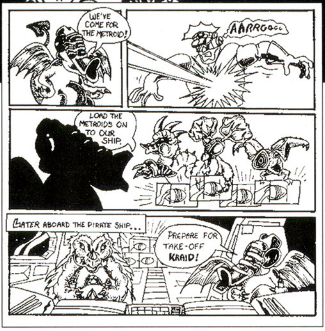

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE MIND-BLOWING!
NINTENDO POWER
Campbell 2005
Espar

NINTENDO POWER

® & © Nintendo.

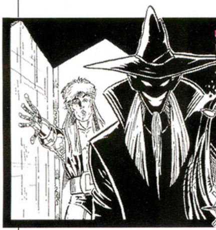

METROID™
EMERGENCY ORDER:
SPACE HUNTER, SAMUS ARAN, DEFEAT THE METROID OF PLANET ZEBETH AND DESTROY THE MOTHER-BRAIN, THE MECHANICAL LIFE VEIN.
— GALAXY FEDERAL POLICE M510
SCOTT CAMPBELL SCRIPT
SCOTT CAMPBELL INKER
SCOTT CAMPBELL PENCILER
SCOTT CAMPBELL LETTERER
SCOTT CAMPBELL EDITOR
SCOTT CAMPBELL EDITOR IN CHIEF


WE'VE COME FOR THE METROID!


WE'VE COME FOR THE METROID!
AARRGGG
LOAD THE METROIDS ON TO OUR SHIP.
LATER ABOARD THE PIRATE SHIP...
PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF KRAID!

Aran's Allure

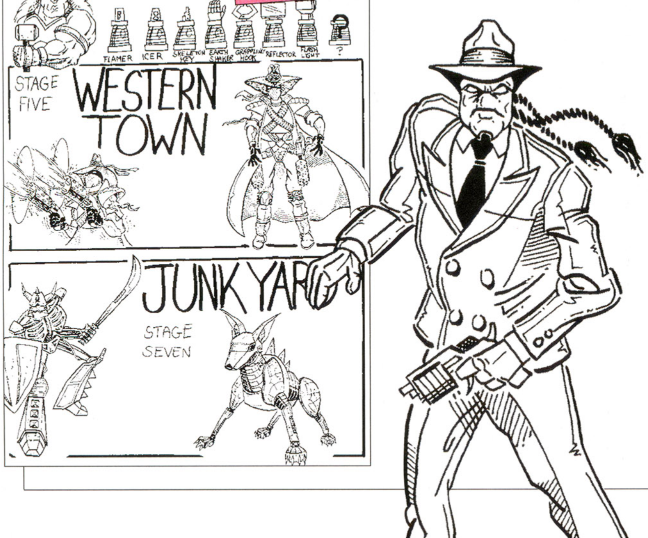
I remember I did a lot of drawings of Metroid. For some reason I really gravitated to that concept and I remember getting to the end and, at the time, it was a big surprise to find out that the Samus Aran character was a female. It inspired creativity and made me kind of think, "That would make for a really good backstory," and I actually started drawing my own Metroid comic book at the time.



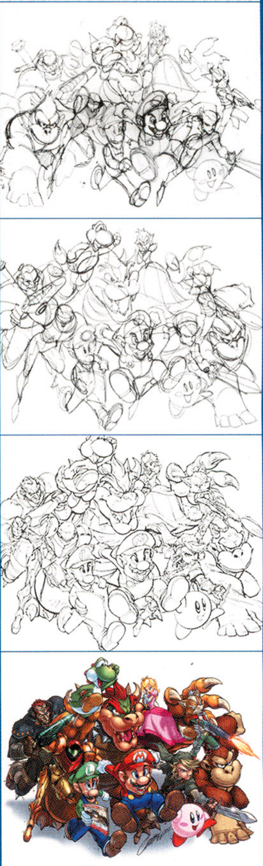
THE ULTIMATE VIDEO GAME
LOCKARM
Jeffrey Scott Campbell unlocks his imagination
Imagine, 12 Stages of Adventure!
DESERT
CITY
CEMETERY

Ultimate Endeavor

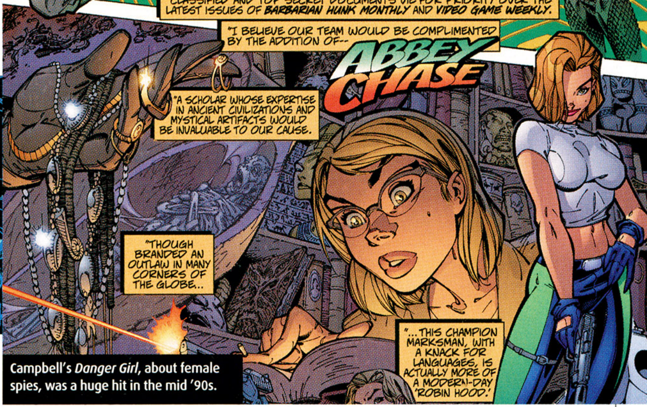
It's funny. As an artist, you're constantly picking apart your own work, and I think there was a time period there where I would look at [the Invent the Ultimate Video Game submission] and cringe and kind of go, "Oh, I can do so much better now." But . . . there's been so much time that I look back on that and I really do see a charm to it. I look at the concept and the ideas I had and it was almost as though I couldn't cram them all into one video game concept.


EVERY OTHER STAGE, OR SO WILL GIVE YOU ONE OF THESE...
FLAMER
ICER
SKELETON KEY
EARTH SHAKER
GRAPPLING HOOK
REFLECTOR
FLASH LIGHT
?
STAGE FIVE
WESTERN TOWN
JUNKYARD
STAGE SEVEN

Concept to Completion



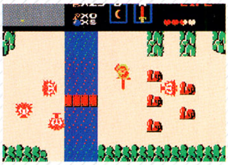
I've always loved concepts or layouts where the characters tend to just be in a massive running formation or something like that. And that's sort of what I was trying to do with this—trying to create an energetic [scene], almost like they're running a marathon or something. You just happened to catch a snapshot of it, you know?


LATEST ISSUES OF BARBARIAN HUNK MONTHLY AND VIDEO GAME WEEKLY.
"I BELIEVE OUR TEAM WOULD BE COMPLIMENTED BY THE ADDITION OF--
ABBEY CHASE
"A SCHOLAR WHOSE EXPERTISE IN ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS AND MYSTICAL ARTIFACTS WOULD BE INVALUABLE TO OUR CAUSE.
"THOUGH BRANDED AN OUTLAW IN MANY CORNERS OF THE GLOBE...
"...THIS CHAMPION MARKSMAN, WITH A KNACK FOR LANGUAGES, IS ACTUALLY MORE OF A MODERN-DAY 'ROBIN HOOD.'

Campbell's *Danger Girl*, about female spies, was a huge hit in the mid '90s.

Campbell's Top 5 Video Games

1. THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
(NINTENDO/NES/1987)



2. METROID
(NINTENDO/NES/1986)

3. CASTLEVANIA
(KONAMI/NES/1987)

4. KID ICARUS
(NINTENDO/NES/1987)

5. SPY HUNTER
(SUNSOFT/NES/1987)

Campbell's Top 5 Comic Book Characters

1. SPIDER-MAN

2. BATMAN

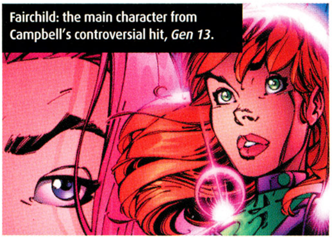
3. THE X-MEN
(WOLVERINE, COLOSSUS, NIGHTCRAWLER)

4. THE HULK

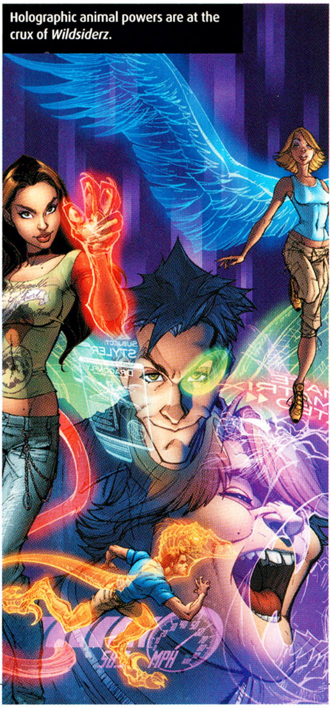
5. HELLBOY

Dangerous Games

We had one of our comic books, *Danger Girl*, turned into a video game. And another comic I worked on in the mid '90s, called *Gen 13*, was also developed into a video game but never . . . actually came out. And in both cases I was somewhat involved but sort of felt disappointed with the end result. I think I just have such a high quality in my mind of what I want something to be that it's very difficult for me to compromise and settle on something that I don't think is as good as it can be.



Fairchild: the main character from Campbell's controversial hit, *Gen 13*.



Holographic animal powers are at the crux of *Wildsiderz*.

A Wild Ride

Wildsiderz is an idea that perhaps the younger generation can really embrace and enjoy, but hopefully the older audience will also see as pretty cool. I think it would be very ideal for a video game. The characters possess these animal abilities mixed with their own human abilities and there's a lot of fun with the visuals—the electronic holograms that project around them. I think the dazzling visuals and the fun, adventurous nature of the comic book would lend itself to a video game perfectly.

Fantastic Future

I've always enjoyed comic books because I really have a lot of my own original ideas, and it's really rewarding to create my own ideas and have them materialize in the form of a comic book, but who knows? In the next few years, maybe I'll find my way back to video games because I like that video games embrace new concepts and new ideas. Perhaps that's actually more the direction [for] some of these concepts I have in my head. You never know.

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CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 200th ISSUE FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT ATLUS USA!
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THE FAST and the Furriest

Hideki Konno, the driving force behind games such as Mario Kart DS and Nintendogs, revs up his engine for a behind-the-scenes interview.

By Chris Hoffman

> "...the one ingredient that has given it its long life is the fun of being able to play with your friends." —Hideki Konno

You might not know the name Hideki Konno, but you've probably played a number of his games. As manager and producer at Nintendo's Entertainment Analysis and Development (EAD) Division, Software Development Group 1, Konno has played a major part in some of Nintendo's biggest hits, from Ice Hockey to Super Mario Kart to The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. Nintendo Power recently had the chance to sit down with Konno to discuss Mario Kart's past, present and future, Revolution, puppy potential and more.

Nintendo Power: Since you've been involved with the series since the beginning, could you explain how the original idea for Mario Kart came about?

Hideki Konno: It starts, really, with F-Zero. That game was floating around EAD at the time, and it was obviously a more speedy, more realistic style of racer, but we wanted to use that system and create some sort of a multiplayer game. Mr. Miyamoto and I were talking about that, and that was pretty much where the idea behind Mario Kart came from. But, of course, we wanted to create a multiplayer experience, [and] there were some limits to what we could do with the system, so we knew that we weren't going to be able to create huge, expansive tracks and worlds like there were in the F-Zero series. So we thought, "Boy, what kind of lends itself to smaller-scale racing? Hey, how about go-karts? Go-karts are small. We could probably do something with go-karts and multiplayer and it would work well." It wasn't originally Mario. It was just some kid in a go-kart racing around a track. I thought, "That's not very interesting. Let's make it Mario." So we put Mario in the kart. And then we went, "Well, we need to have some obstacles. Let's put an oil slick out. Well, you know, maybe a banana. You could slip on a banana. Hey, if we put a banana in there, why don't we put Donkey Kong in there?" And it was that sort of thinking that produced the original Mario Kart.

NP: Did you think the series would become as popular as it has today?

Konno: Well, I didn't think maybe it would get quite this far, but at the same time, you know, it was really the first of this sort of action-racer that we had created. We thought, "Boy, if this could be sort of a blueprint for future games, that'd be great." And I thought it had the potential to do that.

NP: What do you think the ingredients are for making a great racing game?

Konno: I think that there are probably a lot of different things. Realism is really neat if that's the way you decide to go, but with the Mario Kart series, I think the thing that's made it successful, the one ingredient that has given it its long life, is the fun of being able to play with your friends, that person-to-person communication that is inherent in the system. I think that the way we've continued that through each iteration of the game has helped it continue to be a popular title. It's one of those games that even if you lose today, you think, "Yeah, but tomorrow I'll be better. I'll win tomorrow." It's that sort of a game.

NP: In real life, do you like to drive fast?
Konno: Well, yeah, I like to drive quick, but more importantly, I like to drive safely. I'm a safe driver.

NP: Not so many speeding tickets, eh?
Konno: Nope, not yet. Never. Nothing.

NP: Do you think that Mario Kart DS is the best Mario Kart yet?
Konno: Yeah, you know, I think that pretty much after you finish any title you'd like to think, "Wow, this is the best one yet." But regardless of that kind of knee-jerk reaction, I really do think that with Mario Kart DS we've exceeded everything that's come before. I do think it's the best one in the series.

NP: Is that mostly due to Wi-Fi multiplayer?
Konno: That's one of the reasons. I think that the game has a number of really positive elements to it, and one of those is just the volume of the single-player portion of the game, which we've really never focused on before. With this game we have the mission mode, we can also play the battle matches versus computer opponents, and, again, the volume of the content for the single player has surpassed anything we've done in a past Mario Kart. And, of course, then we have the local wireless network, up to eight people, then on top of that we have, as you mentioned, the Wi-Fi connectivity, which allows people to race against the world. Obviously, these are a lot of positive things in the game.

NP: Did you experiment at all with using the touch screen for gameplay?
Konno: Yeah, we tried some things. We tried using the touch screen for driving and handling and whatnot, but the main focus on the development of Mario Kart this time around was using the wireless functionality of the DS in the gameplay. And so we just decided that, hey, there's a lot going on right now. Trying to add touch screen to that—we're not going to do it this time.

NP: In either regular races or battle mode, what are your top five tips for being successful at Mario Kart DS?
Konno: Hmm, difficult question here. I've got three. You've got to use the drift. You've got to be able, when you get in those corners, to start getting those sparks and using that miniturbo to boost. That's really important. And then, something that's new this time around is the drafting aspect—it is something we haven't had before. So this allows you to pick up speed and actually get, like, a speed boost basically without any items. So you're able to pass people up right at the finish line if you're able to use drafting well, so that's something people need to concentrate on. And then, as always, you know, Mario Kart tries to keep games equal by providing items that allow everyone to stay in the race, and this time isn't any different. And then we have new items, so being able to effectively use the Blooper, as well as the Bullet Bill . . . master those.

NP: Is there anything you learned during the testing phase of the game that surprised you? Did people do anything that was unexpected?
Konno: Yeah, every time I watched people play there's always something surprising going on. That's one of the great things about Mario Kart. The way people use items, the way they made combinations, it was like, wow, it's a brand-new game, and yet there were people out there who were using the miniturbos and using drafting with an unbelievable degree of proficiency from my viewpoint. And that was just really surprising. It's hard to come up with specific examples, but I remember just watching and going, "Wow. They're really making great use of that shortcut!" Or making use of things in ways that maybe I hadn't foreseen.

NP: If you could use the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection to play Mario Kart against any three people in the world, who would you play against?

Hideki Konno

MASTER AT WORK

GAMEOGRAPHY

ICE HOCKEY
(1988, NES) - Director

1
5:37
1
Nintendo
Nintendo

SUPER MARIO BROS. 2
(1988, NES) - Assistant Director

SUPER MARIO BROS. 3
(1990, NES) - Assistant Director

SUPER MARIO WORLD
(1991, SNES) - Graphic Designer

SIM CITY
(1991, SNES) - Director

SUPER MARIO KART
(1992, SNES) - Director

SUPER MARIO WORLD 2: YOSHI'S ISLAND
(1995, SNES) - Director

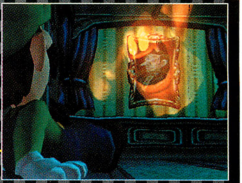
MARIO KART 64
(1997, N64) - Director

YOSHI'S STORY
(1998, N64) - Director

F-ZERO X
(1998, N64) - Advisor

MARIO KART: SUPER CIRCUIT
(2001, GBA) - Supervisor

LUIGI'S MANSION
(2001, GCN) - Director



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
(2003, GCN) - Supervisor

1080° AVALANCHE
(2003, GCN) - Special Thanks

NINTENDOGS
(2005, DS) - Producer

12
9
3
6
11:27
Save
Home
Supplies List
Go Out
Pugsley

GEIST
(2005, GCN) - Producer

MARIO KART DS
(2005, DS) - Producer

Konno: That's just so hard! There's so many people I want to play against! Well, maybe the President—of the US, of course. And Paul McCartney! One more . . . all right, Mr. Iwata. No, Jackie Chan would be good! There's too many people. It's hard to choose. It's tough.

LAP 1/3
CPU2
CPU6
CPU1
6th

NP: Where do you think the Mario Kart series can go from here?
Konno: As you know, Mario Kart has appeared on all of Nintendo's platforms so far, and I think it's done its job on the DS, or at least I hope it will with what's new. So the next logical step, of course, is the Revolution. Really what we hope to do is continue to bring new and creative things to the franchise that appeal not only to our established user base, but also bring new people to the game.

NP: What do you like most about the Revolution controller?
Konno: We're doing a lot of experiments right now with the Revolution controller, and obviously with the direct pointing device (DPD) and its ability to track movement and distance. You know, that's huge, because that's a brand-new thing that we've never seen before in any controller. Trying to envision all the different things we could do with that motion sensor, that DPD, is a little mind-boggling.

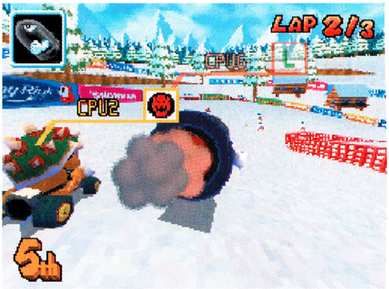
LAP 3/3
CPU1
CPU
4th

NP: What would you consider to be a perfect Wi-Fi experience?
Konno: One of the things that we did with Mario Kart DS, and one of the things we really focused on with the concept behind [the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection was] getting people to be able to play with their friends easily. We wanted it to be really accessible to anyone who has the game, so with other games going forward—and what I consider the ideal gaming experience is what I would consider the ideal gaming experience for everyone, so to put that on top of the question—the perfect Wi-Fi experience for me would be simple to get access to, simple to get set up, anyone's going to be able to do it, and it's going to be safe and worry-free. And when I say worry-free, what I'm talking about is not getting on the Internet having to worry about Internet bullies or people who are out there that aren't into having a good time with everyone but want to ruin the experience for other people. We want to provide, again, a safe and easy Internet experience for people, and that would be the perfect experience—if we are able to do that.

NP: Other than Mario Kart, what other types of games do you think would be good over Wi-Fi?
Konno: Other than Mario Kart, maybe a kart-type game would be good for that, and a game that's actually getting ready to come out here in the US is Animal Crossing. Games that emphasize community, I think, are games that are really suited for Wi-Fi gameplay.

NP: Do you see DS Wi-Fi as a good opportunity for a massively multiplayer type of game?
Konno: If you go for massively multiplayer, it just brings in a whole set of new issues that have to be dealt with. A server, obviously. And, personally, the idea of having very quick, clean, simple Internet access like what we have in Mario Kart is what I'd envision as the best way to go. But if someone were able to do it and meet those conditions, where it was easy for the users to gain access to and play safely, then it would, of course, be really interesting.

NP: What are you most looking forward to seeing once Mario Kart DS launches worldwide and everybody's playing online?
Konno: We put the Wi-Fi connectivity into Mario Kart for a specific reason. Our reason for the whole Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection in general is to get a high participation rate. I'm envisioning, I'm hoping, that Mario Kart sells a lot—that the games get out there to a lot of people. Not only that, not only do we want people to buy it, but we want them to play. So I'm really looking forward to seeing how many people use the Wi-Fi connection, because we think we did a good job making it simple and easy for people to use. So that's the thing I'm looking forward to most: seeing how many people actually jump on there and play.

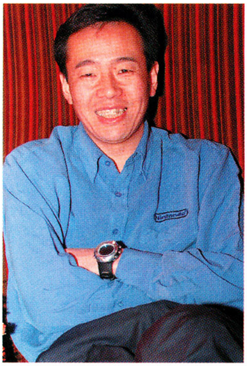


Konno suggests mastering Mario Kart DS's new power-ups, such as the Bullet Bill, if you want to claim the first-place trophy.

NP: Now that the DS has been out for about a year, could I get your thoughts on how it's been received and how it's been doing in the marketplace?
Konno: I think that if we look back at the numbers and whatnot, I think that the DS in Japan, in North America and in Europe as well has really sold well. Obviously we're very excited about that, so we think that the public is excited about the platform and the gaming experience it brings. Also, we positioned it, in addition to our home console and the Game Boy Advance, as a third pillar, and I think the sales reflect that the public is accepting of that and they see the DS in the same way. We're really happy that they have taken the DS and kind of made it Nintendo's third platform.

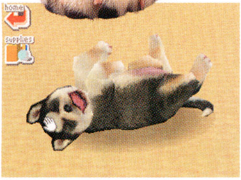
NP: Are there any aspects of the DS technology that you think have been used especially well by developers, or any you think have been underutilized?
Konno: I think that so far we're seeing

> **“. . . Mario Kart has appeared on all of Nintendo's platforms so far. . . . So the next logical step, of course, is the Revolution.”**



> “This ability to interact with a puppy is something new and unique, and we really were able to use the functionality inherent within the DS to accomplish that.”

OFF-LEASH AREA



games that are really utilizing the dual-screen aspect and the touch-screen aspect as well, and I think that if not only Nintendo but other developers continue to use those things we're going to find more and more games that really can only be played on our system. So I think those are two aspects of the DS hardware that have been used very well. On the flip side, one thing that I'd like to see more usage out of would be [searching for nearby players]. You know, in Nintendogs we're calling it Bark mode. The general name is Tag mode. I think with Nintendogs that functionality has become more well-known and I think people are excited about using it. And in Japan, a lot of the newer software is trying to make use of that type of functionality. I think we've accomplished something in that we've created a new wireless community that's not Wi-Fi. I just hope we continue to see more of that, not only in Japan but in North America and in Europe, as well.

NP: Have you thought of introducing a second version of the DS that has a Wi-Fi-enabled version of PictoChat or anything?
Konno: Well, I can't say whether or not that would happen, but I'd like you to continue to think that we're trying to do new things with the hardware system itself.

NP: Why do you think Nintendogs has been so wildly popular?
Konno: I think we were able to create a new style of “gameplay;” we created a new gaming experience. This ability to interact with a puppy is something new and unique, and we really were able to use the functionality inherent within the DS to accomplish that. We've got the touch screen, the dual screen, the wireless, the microphone—all of these things we really were able to use well in Nintendogs, and I think that's one reason why people like it. You look at it in a worldwide perspective—there are a lot of dog-lovers out there. And a lot of these [are] not only dog-lovers, but a lot of people who see it as not just a game but they have an actual extension of a relationship between a person and a dog. It's inherent in the way that the game is built. So I think, really, kind of moving outside the known boundaries of the game into this interactive entertainment experience with a dog is probably the best thing to attribute its success to.

NP: Have you thought about doing a Nintendogs sequel? Maybe that uses Wi-Fi, or has another animal, like cats or naked mole rats?
Konno: Well, whether or not we're going to move forward with them I'm not sure, but I have a lot of different ideas I would love to do. And some of those are maybe Wi-Fi connectivity, like you said, maybe increasing the number of dogs, maybe working with a different animal if it was viable and not just a “let's do it because this one sold well.”

NP: So what are you going to do once Mario Kart DS has launched worldwide and it's finally out in the marketplace?
Konno: We've already started on Revolution stuff, so I'm just going to keep moving forward and plowing ahead with that . . . endlessly moving forward. It never stops.

Nintenaked Mole-Rats*

A GAME WITH RATTITUDE

The huge social colonies of naked mole-rats make them the perfect subject for Nintendo's next animal simulator! Watch the critters dig, dig and dig some more; maybe they'll even find a delectable root to bring you! Groom their wrinkly pinkish-grey skin, maintain their lovely incisors—you'll have to clip them if they get too long—and most importantly, be sure to avoid predatory snakes and fat guys who mistake the naked mole-rats for hot dogs with legs.

NINTENDO DS

Photo by Nicola Kountoupes / ©Cornell University

**Yes, this game is totally fake.*

NP TOP 200

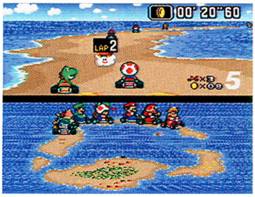
The Countdown Concludes with the Final 40

This is it: a couple of editors had to go to the hospital, but we've pounded out our list of the 40 greatest games ever to appear on a Nintendo console. Please note that only titles released before July 31, 2005, were eligible. Disagree with our choices? State your case by writing to pulse@nintendopower.com.

40 SUPER MARIO KART

SNES • 1992

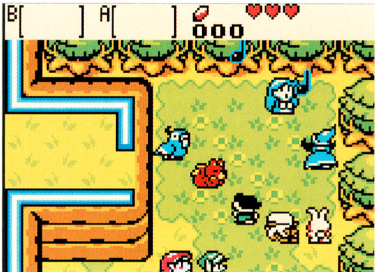
Kart racing wasn't a genre until this unique racer approached the 16-bit starting line. It had a persistent split screen with a map, which in retrospect was a precursor to the DS.



39 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF AGES

GBC • 2001

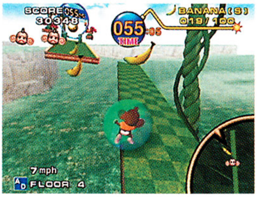
One Zelda game is thrilling enough, but two interconnecting Zeldas at once—as Nintendo delivered with Oracle of Ages and Oracle of Seasons—could generate enough excitement to cause a coronary.



38 SUPER MONKEY BALL

GCN • 2001

Who knew that such cute characters with cinnamon roll ears could be the source of so much tension (when the clock is ticking) and so much relief (when they finally break the ribbon)?

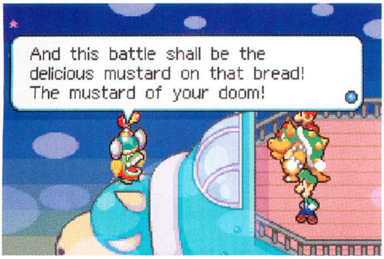


37

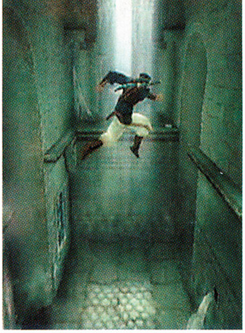
MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA

GBA • 2003

Super Mario RPG: Legend of the Seven Stars and Paper Mario are tough acts to follow, though Superstar Saga easily stands on its own with its ingenious gameplay and laugh-out-loud story.



And this battle shall be the delicious mustard on that bread! The mustard of your doom!



36

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

GCN • 2003

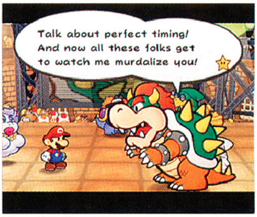
Before the Prince got all aggro (being hunted relentlessly by an immortal time guardian will do that to you), The Sands of Time reinvigorated this storied franchise with a majesty and elegance worthy of royalty.

35

PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR

GCN • 2004

Though the innovative paper mechanics and unique battle system helped, it was Bowser's comedic brilliance that put The Thousand-Year Door over the top as our favorite Mario RPG to date. That and Princess Peach's shower scene.

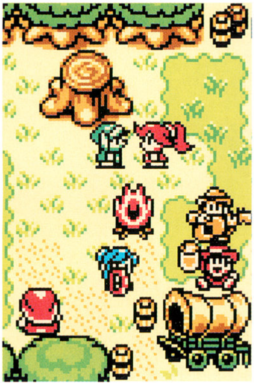


Talk about perfect timing! And now all these folks get to watch me murdalize you!

34

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF SEASONS

GBC • 2001

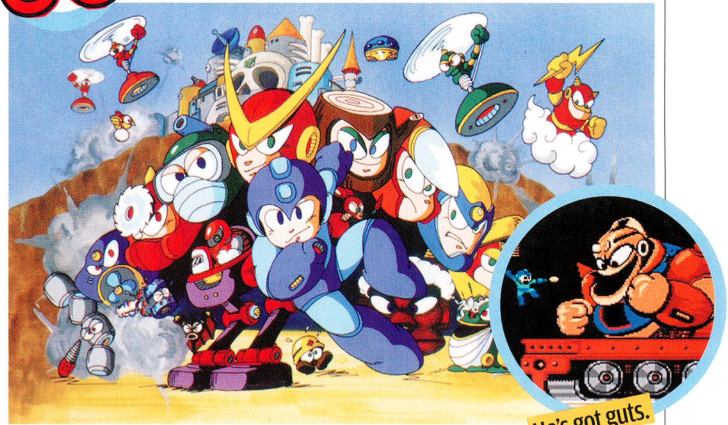


Though Oracle of Ages is longer and more difficult, we found Oracle of Seasons to be a slightly more enjoyable experience. Both games, however, reside at the top of the all-time best Game Boy Color games list.

33

MEGA MAN 2

NES • 1989



He's got guts.

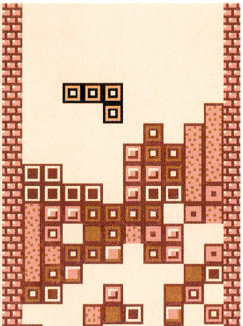
Mega Man creator Keiji Inafune considers Mega Man 2 his favorite Mega Man game. Thanks to its creative levels, cool weapons, excellent bosses and fantastic music, it's ours, too.

32

TETRIS

GB • 1989

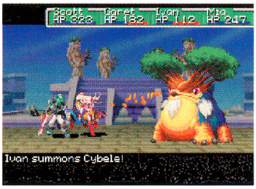
There's no puzzle game more addictive than Tetris. Alexey Pajitnov's concept of lining up falling blocks to create a solid row defined a genre and brought glasnost to millions of gamers.



31

GOLDEN SUN

GBA • 2001



Scott HP 323 Garet HP 182 Ivan HP 112 Mia HP 247

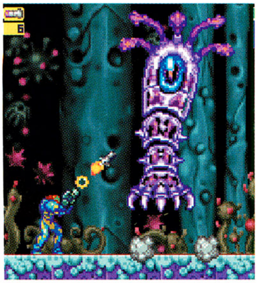
Ivan summons Cybele!

The glorious summoning attacks and magical spells in this old-school marvel pushed the GBA well beyond its perceived limits. As far as original RPGs on the GBA go, you won't find better than this.

30 METROID FUSION

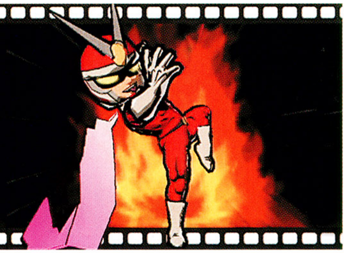
GBA • 2002

The Fusion story line was surprisingly deep for the series, without being too "out there" for the Metroid universe. It's a shame that all video game sequels can't be as well-executed as this.



27 VIEWTIFUL JOE

GCN • 2003

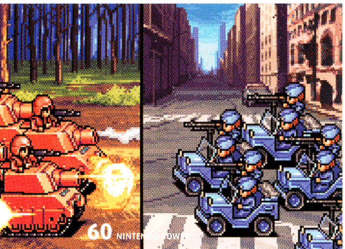


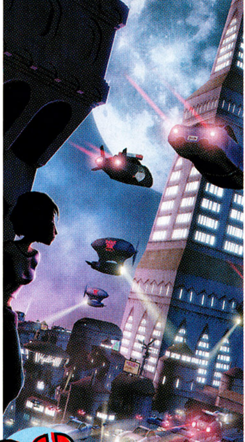
Comic-book style and gameplay substance combined to make one of the most entertaining play experiences on the GCN. It's hard to remember what life was like without Henshin-a-Go-Go.

26 ADVANCE WARS

GBA • 2001

Like a cheerfully colorful version of chess with a twist-filled storyline, Advance Wars is turn-based warfare at its best. Once it hooks you, you'll be dreaming of tank formations and CO Powers for days.





29 BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

GCN • 2003

Michel Ancel's tragically overlooked opus was beautiful and moving, with a heroine that put the likes of Lara Croft to shame. If you don't own this game, we can't be your friends anymore.

5 Best Characters

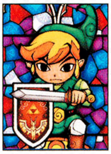
5. Wario
Nintendo's surly anti-hero is greedy, gluttonous and prone to bouts of wanton violence; all traits we hold in high regard.

4. Samus Aran
We know it's cliché, but it's true: bounty-hunting femme fatale Samus Aran is the first lady of video gaming.

3. Solid Snake
Sneaky, deadly and often armed to the teeth, Solid Snake was badass before badass was cool. Chicks dig his gravelly voice too.

2. Mario
Mario is the quintessential video game hero. He's starred in more great games than we can count, and how can you go wrong with that sweet 'stache?

1. Link
Link represents the classic story of a youth becoming a hero, of innocence conquering evil. The character is as timeless as the adventures he goes on.

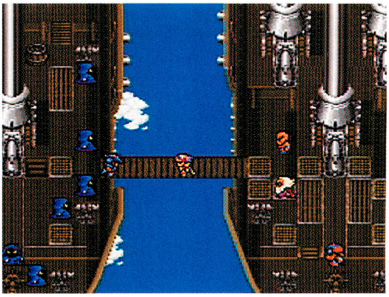


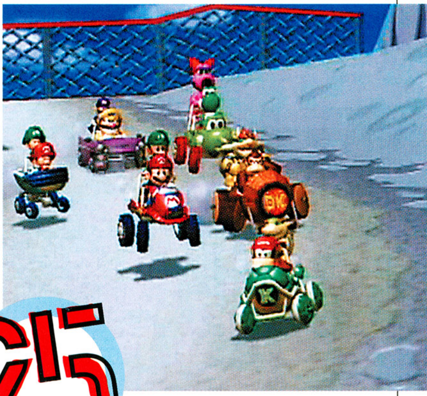
Link manages to do what no one else can: make a floppy green hat look cool.

28 FINAL FANTASY II

SNES • 1991

FFII introduced North American gamers to the world of 16-bit RPGs while bringing back familiar elements such as Chocobos, airships and Cid.

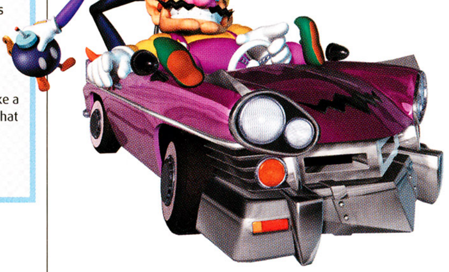




25 MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!

GCN • 2003

Not everyone will agree with our choice of Double Dash!! as the top-ranked Mario Kart title, but you just can't beat the game's multiplayer mayhem. Adding a second playable character to each kart introduced a fantastic co-operative element.



24

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP

GBA • 2005

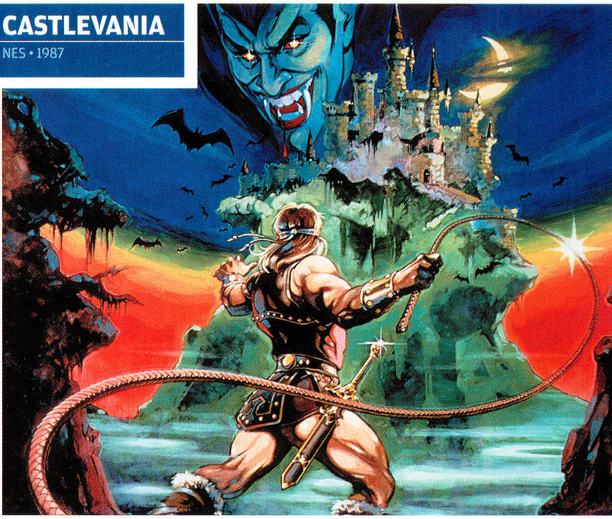
The most recent Zelda adventure retained all the series' beloved elements—brain-straining dungeons, an assortment of creative tools, an exploration-heavy overworld, sword-swinging action—and added the ability to shrink Link down to microscopic size, letting him go places he'd never been. Furthermore, finding and fusing all the Kinstone pieces was as addictive as it was challenging.

23

CASTLEVANIA

NES • 1987

This is the game that made Konami a household name for a lot of gamers. Little did they know at the time that the Castlevania series would turn out to be one of the largest franchises in the industry. And who would have guessed that the star of the game, Simon Belmont, would become one of the superstars of the NES era?

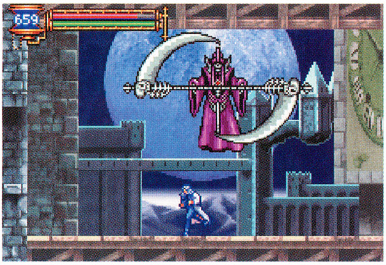


22

CASTLEVANIA: ARIA OF SORROW

GBA • 2003

Just as he did with previous Castlevania games, director Koji Igarashi conjured up an amazingly atmospheric adventure with Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow. The dark themes and wealth of weapons were further enhanced by hero Soma Cruz's ability to gain new powers by stealing enemies' souls. The recent sequel, Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow, may be even better.



21

CHRONO TRIGGER

SNES • 1995

With its time-twisting plot, unforgettable characters, detailed visuals, immersive music, polished battle system and numerous eras to explore, Chrono Trigger provided an almost-perfect experience. The pedigree of the development team—which included talent behind Final Fantasy, Dragon Warrior and Dragon Ball Z—paid off in this RPG masterpiece.

20

GOLDENEYE 007

N64 • 1997

Super Mario 64 might have paved the road for 3-D gaming, but it was GoldenEye 007 that drove a big freaking tank down the middle of it. Console FPSs have taken a lot of their cues from this groundbreaking game, and with good reason—today's shooters are still trying to match the brilliant level design and expansive multiplayer fun of Rare's seminal title.

Comrade carnage!

Randomly Generated

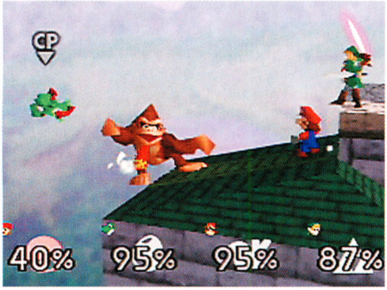
Amaze your friends with these bizarre facts about NP's Top 200.

Games with "Mario" in the title: 23
Games with "Luigi" in the title: 2
Games with "Super" in the title: 19
Games with "64" in the title: 7
Games that are sequels/remakes: 90
Games based on movies/TV/comics: 9
Games starring talking animals: 10
Games prominently featuring ninjas: 12
Games prominently featuring pirates: 6
Games that are sequels based on movies/TV/comics that star talking animals and prominently feature ninjas: 1
Games featured as an NP cover: 81

19 SUPER SMASH BROS.

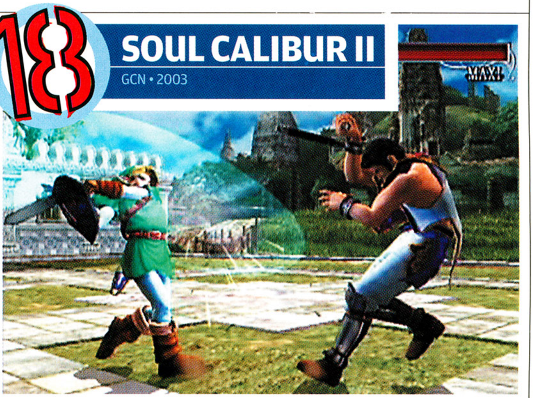
N64 • 1999

Melee perfected the concept, but this is the one that started it all. Smash trumped all other fighting games of its time with addictive gameplay, and allowed us to pit our favorite Nintendo characters against one another for the first time. And more importantly, it let us beat up on Pikachu and Jigglypuff.



18 SOUL CALIBUR II

GCN • 2003

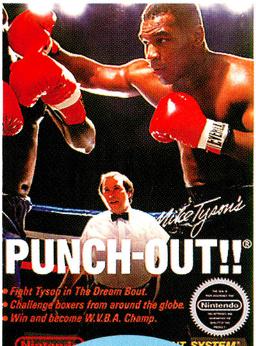


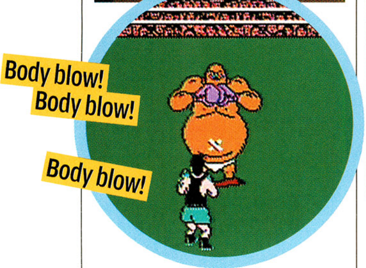
The Nintendo GameCube hasn't seen tons of fighting games, but it hosted one of the best: Soul Calibur II. SCII stunned gamers with its intricate but accessible play control and artistic imagery. The GCN version garnered well-deserved praise for the inclusion of Link as a playable character—his mature depiction and sophisticated fighting style meshed perfectly with the rest of Soul Calibur's dynamic cast of fighters.

17 MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT!!

NES • 1987

Everybody's got a tell. When Piston Honda's eyebrows wriggle, you knock him silly with an uppercut. When King Hippo covers his mouth, you go for a body blow. Punch-Out!! is a perfect distillation of the sweet science into a video game, and was an inspiration for the fighting games and sports titles that followed it.


Mike Tyson's
PUNCH-OUT!!®
• Fight Tyson in The Dream Bout.
• Challenge boxers from around the globe.
• Win and become W.V.B.A. Champ.
Nintendo
Nintendo
SYSTEM®



Body blow!
Body blow!
Body blow!

5 Best Endings

5. Resident Evil 4
RE4's producer swore that the game had nothing to do with Umbrella, the T-Virus or Wesker. The ending proved him a liar.

4. The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
We never wanted Link's amazing journey to end, so Ocarina of Time's touching finale proved bittersweet.

3. Chrono Trigger
If Chrono Trigger's emotional regular endings weren't enough, 10 more crazy endings were available on the second play-through.

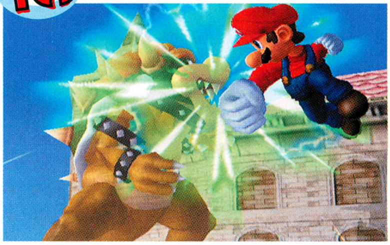
2.Metroid
Defeating Mother Brain and obliterating the space pirates was fulfilling in itself, but seeing Samus unmask herself blew our minds.

1. The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker
The brutal finishing blow in The Wind Waker's final battle is one of the most shocking moments in gaming history.

He doesn't seem quite so cute after you see what he does to Ganondorf.

16 SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

GCN • 2001

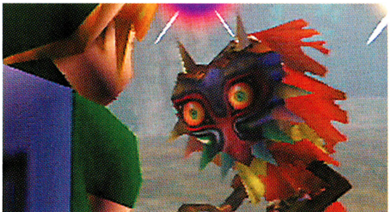


The jump from Super Smash Bros. to SSBM was incredible. Thanks to the hardware shift from the N64 to the GCN, characters went from being mildly detailed to, "Oh my god, I can see the rivets on Mario's pants!" Graphics aside, SSBM trumped its predecessor by having more of what fans wanted—more characters, more stages, more everything.

15 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

N64 • 2000

Majora's Mask was an unusual, somewhat daring departure for the Legend of Zelda series. Ganon wasn't the villain, it wasn't set in Hyrule and your mission wasn't to save Princess Zelda. But the various masks you collected were integrated brilliantly into the classic Zelda gameplay, and giving you only three days to complete your objectives before the end of the world added an incredible sense of urgency.



14 FINAL FANTASY III

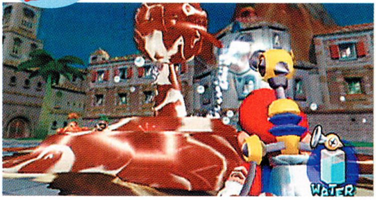
SNES • 1994

The second North American Final Fantasy game added new layers of characterization and feeling to the role-playing genre, then Final Fantasy III took that foundation and built it into an emotional rollercoaster. Unique skills for each character made combat a joy, and the apocalyptic plot was mesmerizing. Is this the best Final Fantasy game ever? Quite possibly.

♬ We must part now.
My life goes on.
But my heart won't give
you up.

13 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

GCN • 2002



Fire world! Ice world! Water world! By 2002, what platformer *wasn't* mimicking Super Mario 64? Super Mario Sunshine wasn't. In it, Mario redefined platformers yet again by riffing artfully on one theme (island vacation) across many worlds. Most brilliant moment: catching rays at Sirena Beach, only to see the sunrise turn into a manta-ray boss. By hovering and hosing with Mario's water-cannon backpack, players could dissolve the foe into dozens of angry minirays. SMS was fiendishly beautiful everywhere you looked; a perfect getaway.

You were thoroughly satisfied with Samus's first-generation arsenal, but you were flat-out giddy when you used her new tools in Super Metroid. The SNES game introduced a complete-as-you-go interactive map, the exquisitely accurate Grapple Beam and the exploration-encouraging X-Ray Scope, all of which have influenced countless subsequent games. Super Metroid did such a good job combining linear with nonlinear gameplay, and platform action with adventure, that it took eight years to create a worthy follow-up.

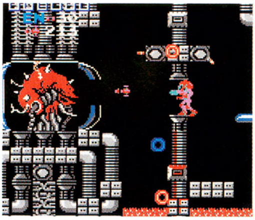
12 SUPER METROID

SNES • 1994

11 METROID

NES • 1987

Metroid made a huge splash in 1987, and it continues to send ripples throughout the gaming world. It was the first game to use a password to save progress. It had an ingenious control scheme that let you do so much with so few buttons, and it shocked us with an alternate ending that revealed helmeted hero Samus Aran's true identity—that's big.



System Breakdown

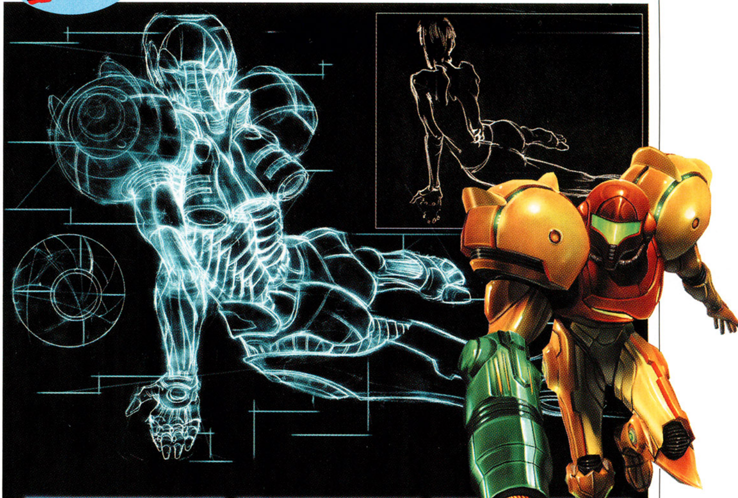
Which console has the most games on the list? Here's a hint: it's not the Virtual Boy.

NES: 40
Game Boy: 6
Super NES: 43
Game Boy Color: 5
Virtual Boy: 1
N64: 27
Game Boy Advance: 24
GCN: 50
Nintendo DS: 4

10 METROID PRIME

GCN • 2002

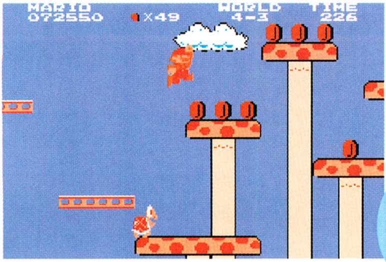
Let's face it—the chances of rookie developer Retro Studios making a quality Metroid FPS were slim to none, but they pulled it off. By paying extreme attention to every detail, every enemy and every weapon, they hand-squeezed all the Metroidness they could out of the source material and created something absolutely brilliant.



9 SUPER MARIO BROS.

NES • 1985

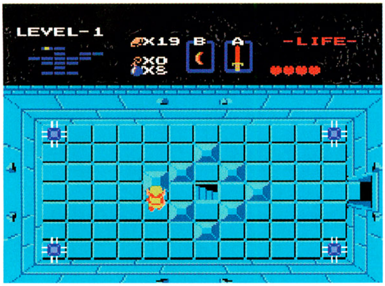
If you've played video games since the beginning, you'll know that there is one exact moment in which games stopped being classified as parlor tricks and started becoming epic adventures. The debut of Super Mario Bros. was that moment. We wonder if Miyamoto had any idea how close he was to perfection during the creation of this amazing game.



7 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

NES • 1987

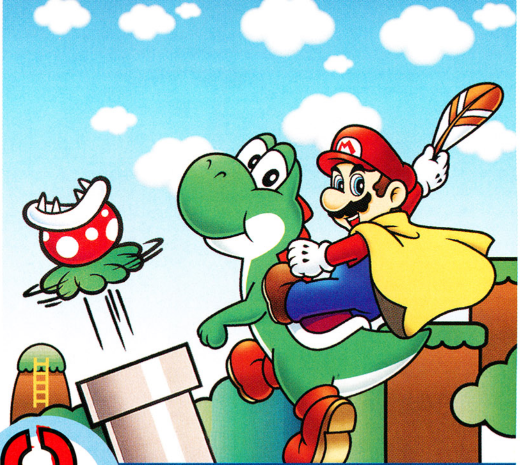
The Legend of Zelda forever changed our perception of what video games could be. Set in a huge (or so it seemed at the time), imaginative world, it melded action, exploration and puzzle-solving to produce an adventure unlike anything we had experienced before. Though it may look primitive by today's standards, few games have engrossed us or captured our imaginations like this NES legend.



Play by the Numbers

We broke out our abacus to count how many games from each genre made the list.

Action: 35
Adventure: 39
Alternative: 11
Fighting: 7
Platformer: 14
Puzzle: 6
Racing: 15
RPG: 29
Shooter: 12
Sports: 21
Strategy: 11



8 SUPER MARIO WORLD

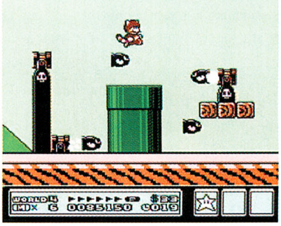
SNES • 1991

The Super NES needed an awesome game for the system's launch, and that game was Super Mario World. The insatiable Yoshi brought an extra element of fun to the Mario formula, and a vast world provided a delicious playground of plains, caves, ghost houses, castles and more—complete with multiple routes and exits—for Mario to show off his moves.

6 SUPER MARIO BROS. 3

NES • 1990

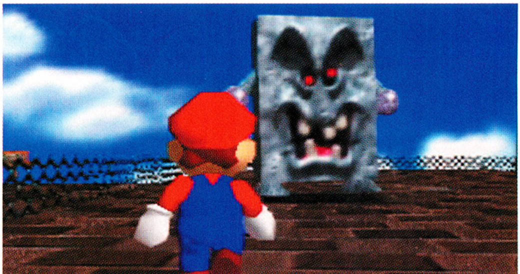
Oh! Mama Mia! The platformer came of age with what is arguably still the best of its genre. SMB3's levels are short, perfect blasts of Koopa-crushing satisfaction—always challenging but never frustrating—that turned the use of power-ups into an art form. Early inventions like the Mushroom and the Fire Flower made Mario powerful, but the Tanooki Suit allowed him to fly.



5 SUPER MARIO 64

N64 • 1996

The first 3-D incarnation of Mario was an immediate hit for the N64, and rightly so. It took the brightly colored, full-of-imagination Mario worlds we had grown to love, and re-created them in a fully polygonal world. Thankfully, Miyamoto knew exactly what he was doing, and SM64 established a tremendous benchmark for future 3-D games.

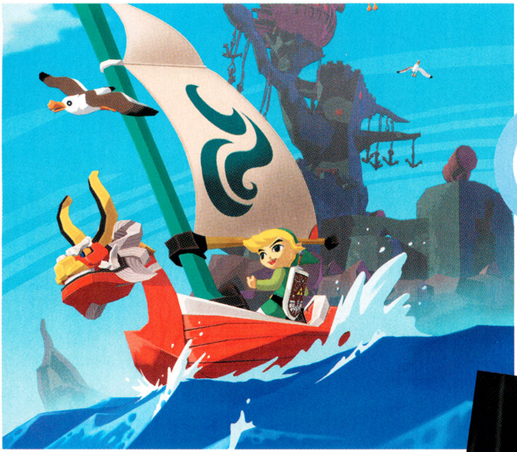


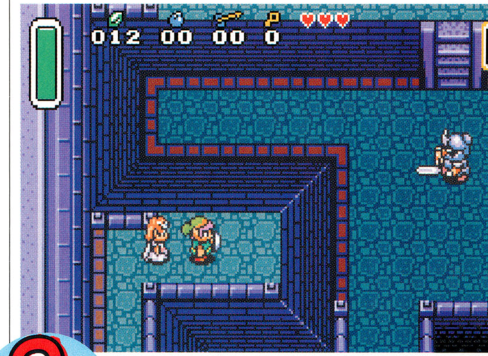
4

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

GCN • 2003

Nintendo braved uncharted territory by exploring the far reaches of cel-shaded design, causing a rift between gamers who muttered about cartoony effects and those who heralded it as one of the biggest achievements in years. But The Wind Waker wasn't merely a game with an anime paint job; it *merged* gameplay with anime. Link's every move was drenched with expression. Each enchanting moment—whether it was an intense standoff against Gohma or a touching scene between Link and his talking boat—was as magical as it could be. The characters were ultra-expressive. The storytelling and dialogue were more epic than in any other Zelda game. And the climactic fight between Link and archnemesis Ganon was an absolute shocker.





3

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

SNES • 1992

After Zelda dabbled in the realm of side-scrollers, A Link to the Past returned the franchise to its roots in glorious 16-bit goodness. From the storytelling to the dungeons and boss battles, every aspect of A Link to the Past shone like no other SNES game. The only frustrating moment was when the game ended, and there was nothing more to savor (until you played through it all over again, of course). A Link to the Past marked the beginning and the end of SNES Zelda games, but The Minish Cap and Four Swords have, thankfully, followed in its footsteps.

2

RESIDENT EVIL 4

GCN • 2005

Never in the history of mankind has there been a creation as truly wondrous as Resident Evil 4. Well, that might be overstating its greatness, but not by much. Without question, there have been few games as consistently captivating, creepy and fun to play from beginning to end as RE4. It's also easily the best-looking game to date—when people see it, they weep with a mixture of joy and melancholy that more games aren't as hauntingly beautiful. Resident Evil 4 will serve as a benchmark for quality game design for many years to come.

You are dead!

1

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME

N64 • 1998

Surprised?
Probably not. Ocarina of Time sits atop many a gamer's list of all-time favorites, and for good reason. It successfully transitioned the series to 3-D, blazing the trail for adventure games that followed with its ingenious controls and intuitive gameplay. More importantly, it managed to improve upon the already legendary franchise. Brilliantly crafted dungeons took advantage of the third dimension to immerse us like never before. New and innovative play mechanics were introduced around every corner, instilling the game with the same sense of discovery as the NES original. The time-travel theme gave Link's journey an epic feel, bolstered by a story with greater weight than any of its predecessors'. Along the way, we saw a different side to some familiar characters, giving us a richer understanding of the Zelda universe. Everything came together to create a game as close to perfection as any before it or since. A true masterpiece of the art form. On a list filled with memorable experiences, this is the one we're most likely to remember always.

LEGO
STAR WARS
THE VIDEO GAME
& EIDOS CONGRATULATE NINTENDO POWER ON ITS 200TH ISSUE!

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MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

SAND ADVICE

Take back Babylon in Ubisoft's latest adventure royale, Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones.

By Steve Thomason

The Prince has outwitted fate and found love, and now stands aboard a ship bound for home. Finally, everything seems right with the world. There's only one problem: Babylon is burning. The Prince's trifles with the timeline have had dire consequences; consequences he can no longer escape. It's time to face his past. Our strategies will help you vanquish the Prince's toughest foes and return the throne to its rightful owner.

A Time to Kill

One of the biggest additions to The Two Thrones is the speed kill. If you get close enough to an enemy without being spotted, you can cut him down quickly with a series of well-timed strikes. Simply press the Y Button to initiate the kill, then hit the B Button each time your dagger flashes. The poor sap won't even know what hit 'em.

These soldiers are the most common foes in the game. A speed kill against them consists of two strikes.

Sand Gate guardians can summon reinforcements—unless they're dead before they see you. Three strikes will do the trick.

Archers are best suited to long-range combat, so if you can sneak up on one, a single strike will finish him off.

Despite their lack of armor, these powerful berserkers take five strikes to bring down.

©2005 Ubisoft

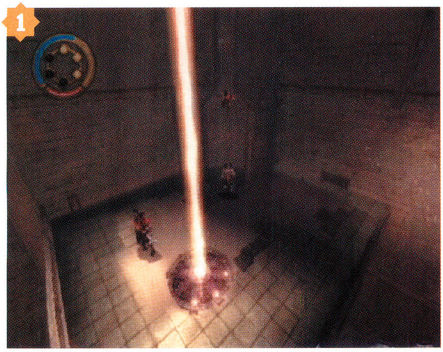
Enemies at the Gate

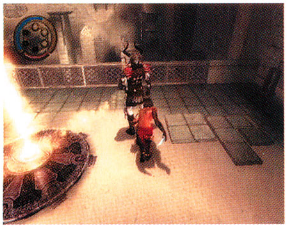
Throughout Babylon, the enemy has created Sand Gates that allow troops to travel between different parts of the city instantly. Stationed at each one is a guardian who must activate the gate. The guardian's ability to call for an endless stream of reinforcements can result in some nightmarish battles. Luckily, you can avoid all that hassle by snuffing him out with a speed kill. It'll make life much easier, and more importantly, you'll feel like a total badass.

THE FORTRESS

You'll come to the first Sand Gate shortly after your initial experience playing as the Dark Prince. Your reward for defeating the guardian and reaching the gate is a new Sand Tank.

1





Save your game, then slide down the gap in the railing and wait for the patrolling soldier to stop in front of you. If you eliminate him with a speed kill, you can easily sneak behind the Sand Gate guardian and do the same.

QUICK TIP TIME

Get a Life

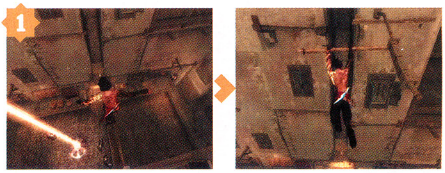
Hidden throughout the city are special fountains that extend the Prince's life bar. The upgrades are much easier to find than they were in The Sands of Time or Warrior Within, but they still require you to navigate some of the game's toughest trap-filled hallways.

The path leading to one of the life upgrades is hidden behind a curtain. Another lies beyond a secondary door that opens when you pull a dagger switch. As you proceed through the game, keep your eyes peeled for such routes that diverge from the main path.

THE LOWER CITY

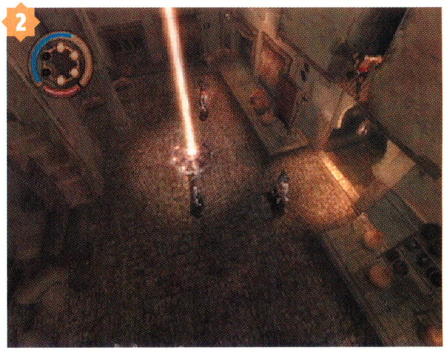
At the conclusion of the first chariot scene, you'll end up on the rooftops in the Lower City. The second Sand Gate is on the street below. On the way down, avoid smashing pots and other items, or you'll alert nearby enemies.

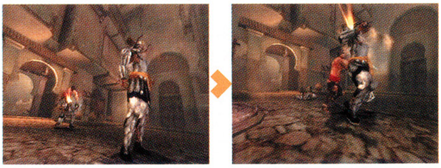
1



When you reach the plank in the above-left screenshot, leap and grab onto the pole, then swing to the narrow gap in the wall and slide to the bottom. Make sure you turn around to face the soldiers.

2



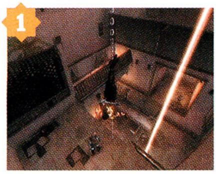


You can eliminate both soldiers with a double speed kill if you wait until the one marching back and forth stops beneath you with his back turned. Once you take care of them, sneaking behind the Sand Gate guardian should be a cinch. The gate's bounty is 100 Sand Credits.

THE BALCONIES

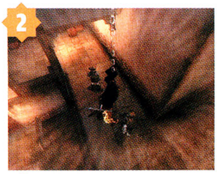
You must contend with four enemies as you make your way down the balconies. As always, silence is golden. Time your wall runs so the enemies are in position for a quick speed kill. The Sand Gate at the bottom of this area will net you the ability called The Eye of the Storm.

1



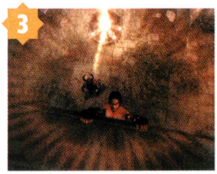
You'll eventually come to a series of dagger plates that lead to a chain. Slide down the chain and speed-kill the soldier at the bottom when he moves into position. To avoid attracting unwanted attention, stealth is of the utmost importance from here on out.

2



Walk the plank and jump to another chain, then slide down and hang tight until the soldiers start to move. Once both have turned their backs to you, initiate a double speed kill. With the last two goons taken care of, follow the hallway to an opening at the other end of the square.

3

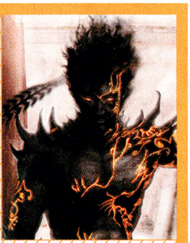


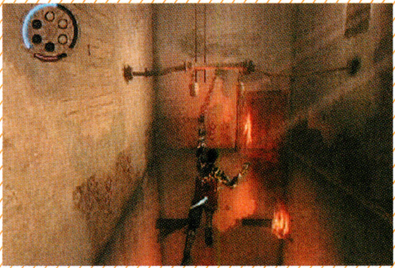
Watch the guardian as he circles the Sand Gate. When he passes beneath your position, hang from the ledge and dispatch him with a speed kill. The Eye of the Storm is yours! This new power allows you to slow the passage of time, which comes in quite handy during heated battles.

QUICK TIP TIME

The Dark Side

From time to time (pardon the pun), our hero will transform into the Dark Prince. His ignoble alter ego grants him superior fighting capabilities, but at a price: it gradually kills him. The only way to revitalize the Dark Prince is by collecting sands. You'll often find the life-replenishing granules inside vases, baskets and other objects.



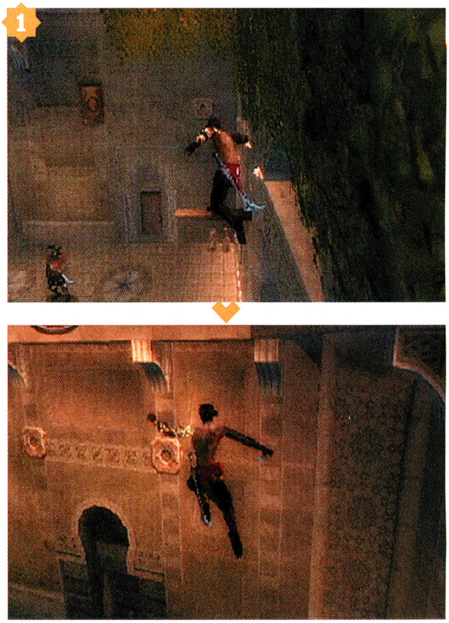


When trying to cross a large gap as the Dark Prince, remember that you can swing from bars and torches using his chains.

THE TEMPLE ROOFTOPS

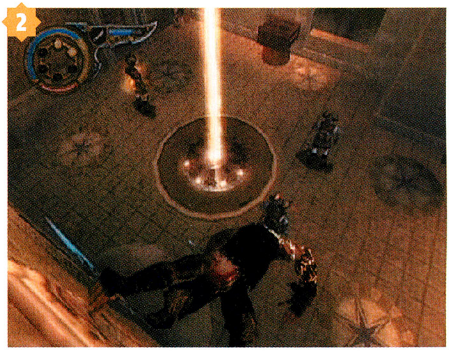
You'll see the light from the fourth Sand Gate on the other side of a wall protected by hounds. Make your way to the top of the rubble (you'll have to wall-run along the curved surfaces to jump onto the horizontal poles). When you reach the wooden plank, make sure no guards are watching from the doorway before you leap to the next balcony.

1



On the other side of the wall, hang from the railing and leap to another wooden plank. Ignore the opportunity for a speed kill here and continue along the wall, using dagger plates and a shutter.

2

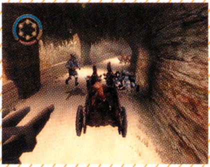


From your perch on the third dagger plate, wait for the soldiers to line up and for all three enemies to face away from you. You can perform a double speed kill on the soldiers, then sneak up behind the guardian. The gate he was protecting contains another Sand Tank.

QUICK TIP TIME

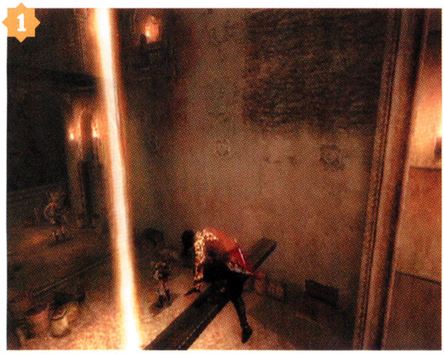
Grand Theft Chariot

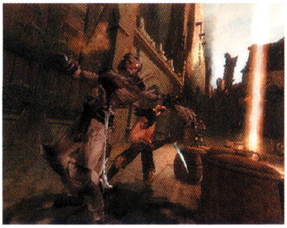
To take a break from jumping and climbing, the Prince will occasionally commandeer a chariot. Watch out for enemies trying to hitch a ride, and when you collide with another chariot, try to force it into a wall or outcropping (without crashing yourself, of course).



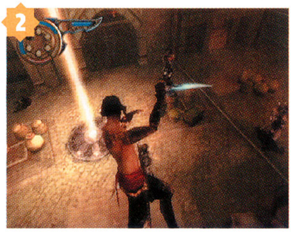
THE MARKET DISTRICT

After dealing with a trio of soldiers in the adjacent alley, you'll come to a wooden plank almost directly above the Sand Gate. Four enemies guard the gate. To avoid being spotted, you must knock off each foe individually. Reaching the gate will earn you 150 Sand Credits.





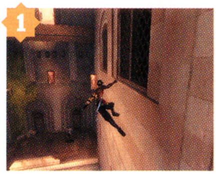
While you're standing on the plank, one of the soldiers will stand directly beneath you. Wait for the farthest enemy to start walking away, then quickly neutralize the soldier below. Be sure to intiate the speed kill from the middle of the plank; if you drop from the end of it, you'll break a basket and alert the others.



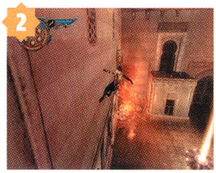
After you kill the first soldier, run up the wall to the nearest dagger plate. Dash to the second plate and take out the next soldier when his partners' backs are turned, then scurry back up and finish off the remaining soldier from the third plate. Once that's done, sneaking up on the guardian will be easy.

THE UPPER CITY

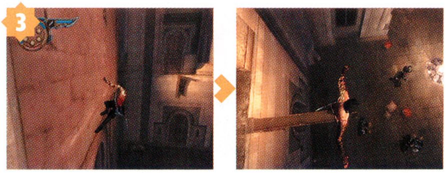
The next Sand Gate is at the bottom of a courtyard. As usual, you'll approach it from above. Within the gate lies the Winds of Sand, a new sand power that allows you to knock down enemies. It'll come in handy when you find yourself surrounded.



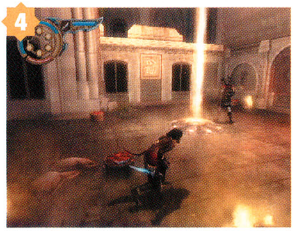
After leaping from a pair of shutters, you'll end up on a small ledge. When the soldier below gets close enough, put an end to his wicked existence with a speed kill.



From the balcony where you dispatched the previous soldier, run along the wall and launch yourself from another shutter. Upon landing, you'll startle some pigeons, which will cause the guards to look in your direction. Stay close to the wall and out of sight until your foes resume their normal patrols.



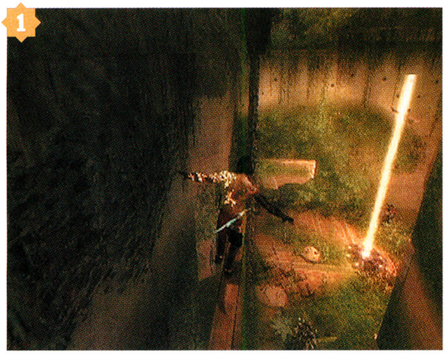
Once things settle down, run along the wall and leap to the plank near the doorway. From there, you can wait for the soldiers below to get within range for a double speed kill. Just be sure to wait until the Sand Gate guardian is walking away.



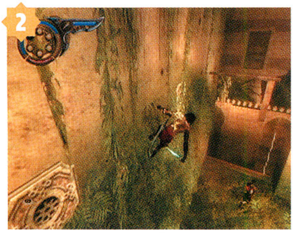
The guardian will walk around the Sand Gate and stop in front of the wall switch. Swiftly introduce him to your dagger before he turns around.

THE CITY GARDENS

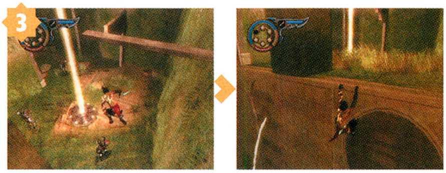
The Sand Gate in the City Gardens holds the sixth and final Sand Tank. Before you can reach it, you must pull the dagger switch in the adjacent courtyard. To stealthily dispose of all four enemies there, start with the two nearest the statue. You can perform a double speed kill from atop the wooden walkway when the patrolling soldier stops nearby.



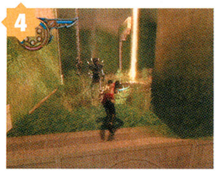
You'll see three enemies guarding the Sand Gate as you approach. Leap from the wooden plank to the tree, then slide down a little bit before jumping to the narrow walkway, or you'll overshoot and land on the ground.



Ignore the speed kill opportunity from the walkway and jump to the dagger plate. Proceed to the following plate, then onto the wooden plank.



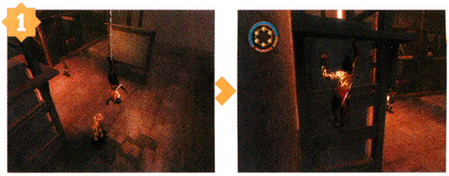
You can hang from the plank and slay the Sand Gate guardian first. Since it takes three strikes to finish off the guardian with a speed kill, be sure to drop as soon as the parolling enemy turns around. When you're done with the guardian, quickly turn around and hang off the ledge behind you.



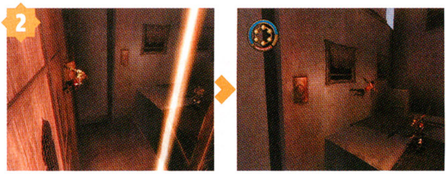
Shimmy to your left and wait behind the large pillar until the soldier standing next to it turns around and the patrolling soldier starts to walk away. Pull yourself up and rapidly execute the first soldier, then hang off the ledge again and wait for the remaining foe. When he turns his back, sneak up behind him and finish the job.

THE PROMENADE

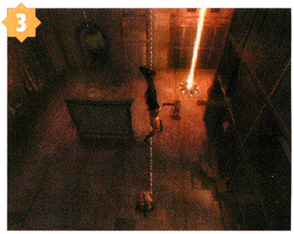
You'll come to the next Sand Gate after a brief stint as the Dark Prince. You can skip the gate by heading down the alcove behind you instead of climbing the wooden platform at the end of step 1, but then you'd miss out on 150 Sand Credits.



Make your way to the chain hanging from the far side of the room and slide to the bottom. A berserker will pass underneath you, but don't pounce until the guardian near the Sand Gate turns his back to you. Once you're finished with the berserker, duck behind the wooden platform nearby and start climbing.



From atop the platform you can see a second Sand Gate guardian patrolling the balcony on the other side of the room. When he nears the edge, run along the wall and bounce off a pair of shutters to launch into a speed kill. If you time it right, you won't have to press Y; the speed kill will be initiated automatically.

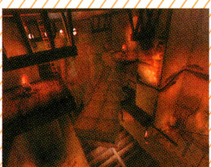


Next, get to the top of the wooden partition and leap to the chain hanging in front of it. Slide down and drop the other berserker as soon as the remaining Sand Gate guardian looks away. If you're quick, you can then sneak behind the guardian before he turns around.

QUICK TIP TIME

A Little Help from Dad

To escape the burning building, you must use a statue of the king to smash through the doors. This is one of the most difficult puzzles in the game; we'd tell you how to solve it, but what fun would that be?

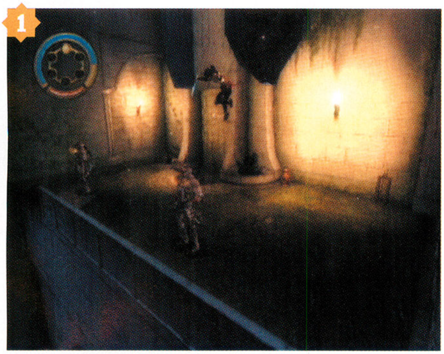


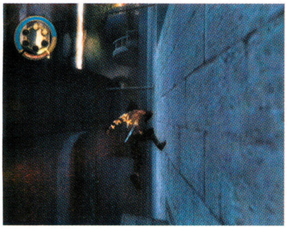
OK, fine, ya big baby. Use the two sets of levers and dagger switches to move the statue in the following order: forward (toward the door), clockwise, clockwise, forward, forward, clockwise, back, clockwise, forward, clockwise, forward, counterclockwise, forward.

THE HANGING GARDENS

The final Sand Gate lies beyond the save fountain in the Hanging Gardens. The prize that awaits is a devastating new sand power called Sand Storm. Not only does it knock down every enemy in your vicinity, it also deals damage to them.

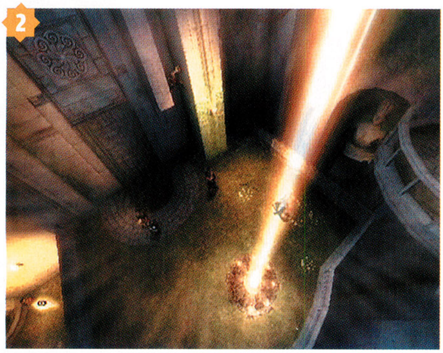
1

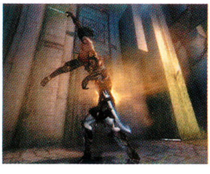




You'll see a pair of berserkers on a balcony before the Sand Gate. Slide down the narrow gap in the pillar and speed-kill the guy walking back and forth when his partner's not looking. Hurry behind the other berserker and take him out, then proceed along the wall to the dagger plate.

2



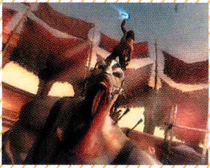


Continue toward the Sand Gate until Farah closes another shutter for you. Run across the wall and slide down the narrow gap. When all three foes look away, drop immediately and dispatch the nearest guardian, then sneak up behind the other one and do the same. You likely won't be able to speed-kill the remaining enemy, but he shouldn't pose much of a threat on his own.

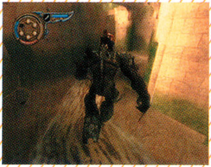
QUICK TIP TIME

Don't Let 'Em Boss You Around

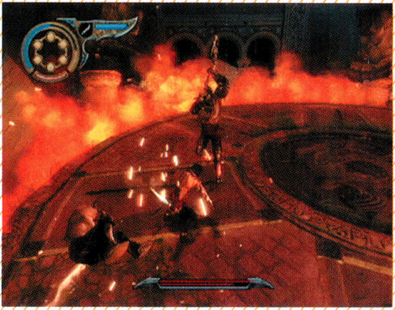
Unlike those in previous Prince of Persia games, the bosses in The Two Thrones are wonderfully varied. Each one requires a different approach that involves context-sensitive actions similar to a speeed kill.



Use your surroundings to reach the first boss's height, then leap on his head and stab his eyes. Once you've poked out both peepers, he'll flail at you blindly. Slash the backs of his legs to finish him off.



Hack at the ancient guardian's legs to bring him to his knees, then hop on his back and get ready for a wild ride through the canals of Babylon. Steering the behemoth is easier if you use The Eye of the Storm.



The swordsman will deflect your attacks, but keep swinging at him until his partner leaps at you with his ax. If you roll out of the way, the ax will get stuck in the ground, leaving its owner open to attack. Eventually, you'll be able to perform speed-kill-style strikes on both foes.

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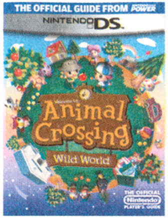

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February 2006, Volume 200

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2. I liked the idea, but I disagree with the choices.
3. A huge waste of space. Give me more previews and reviews.
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D. Which of the following statements most closely reflects your feelings about this month's Resident Evil preview?
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1. Wonderful art and an interesting article.
2. I liked the art, but the article wasn't very interesting.
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4. The Legend of Zelda **5.** Madden NFL **6.** Metroid
7. Pokémon **8.** Star Fox **9.** Super Mario Bros.

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POINT COUNTER POINT

Opinionated? Us? Well, now that you mention it, the NP writers are a bit stubborn when it comes to our favorite topics.

Mario or Zelda—which is the better franchise?

ANDY M.: We could both spout off lists of great games in each franchise, but the "best franchise" crown must go to Zelda, hands down. Both Mario and Zelda games rely little on dialogue to tell their stories (which usually involve saving a princess). But every Zelda title is just so incredibly immersive. Link is a character that we can all relate to in some way, existing in these amazing worlds. Mario, on the other hand, is a plumber.

CHRIS S.: Hey, there's nothing wrong with the septic sciences. And anyways, who could someone relate to more than a blue-collar guy just tryin' to get a girl and get back at the man? (The man being a giant green monster, of course.) But my love for Mario comes not only from the great games he's been in, but also from the number of awesome games he's had a part in, from tennis to graffiti-cleaning to plain ol' partying.

> **"Who could someone relate to more than a blue-collar guy just tryin' to get a girl and get back at the man?"**
>
> —Chris S.

ANDY M.: You forgot pinball, baseball, RPGs . . . the list goes on forever. And let's face it—there are a few Mario games that aren't all that great. You can't really say that about the Zelda series.

CHRIS S.: Yeah, even the so-so Zelda titles are better than most of the games out there. But how 'bout in terms of the Mario game universe? You can't top Toad, Bowser or Peach. As icons, they're WAY bigger than your Like Like will ever be. There's just more to love all the way around. Heck, Yoshi and Wario even have their own games! They're so big they don't even need Mario!

ANDY M.: Quality is better than quantity, Chris. I'd take a Wind Waker over a hundred Wario Worlds any day. It's amazing to me that the Zelda series has managed to stay so refined over the years, yet it reinvents itself for every title.

CHRIS S.: I should hope the Zelda series would be refined since we have to wait so long between games. At least we get a little taste of the Mario magic about once a year. I mean, I don't think Zelda Kart DS is comin' out any time soon.

ANDY M.: Having to wait a while for the next Zelda game doesn't bother me one bit. As a kid, the waiting period between Zelda II and A Link to the Past felt like a million years, but it was worth every second. I feel the same way about Twilight Princess. If Aonuma's team needs a few more months to make it the best Zelda ever, then so be it. Heck, take another year if that's what's necessary.

> **"Quality is better than quantity, Chris. I'd take a Wind Waker over a hundred Wario Worlds any day."**
>
> —Andy M.

CHRIS S.: Alright, alright. I don't think we're ever gonna see eye to eye on this issue. Let's just drop it for now. How 'bout a friendly game of Smash Bros.? I get to be Link!

Are games better now than they were 10 years ago?

CHRIS H.: Ten years ago, the video game industry was bursting with creativity. Since then, most of the gaming industry has been focusing on technology rather than interesting gameplay. With a few notable exceptions, game companies are just rehashing the same ideas now that were big a decade ago, and the results usually haven't been as successful as they were then.

> **"Ten years ago, the video game industry was bursting with creativity."**
> —Chris H.

GEORGE S.: Technology has led to some great gaming advancements, such as the emergence of the first-person shooter and the sandbox game. Also, advanced production value creates genuinely immersive experiences in games such as Resident Evil 4 and Peter Jackson's King Kong, to name two.

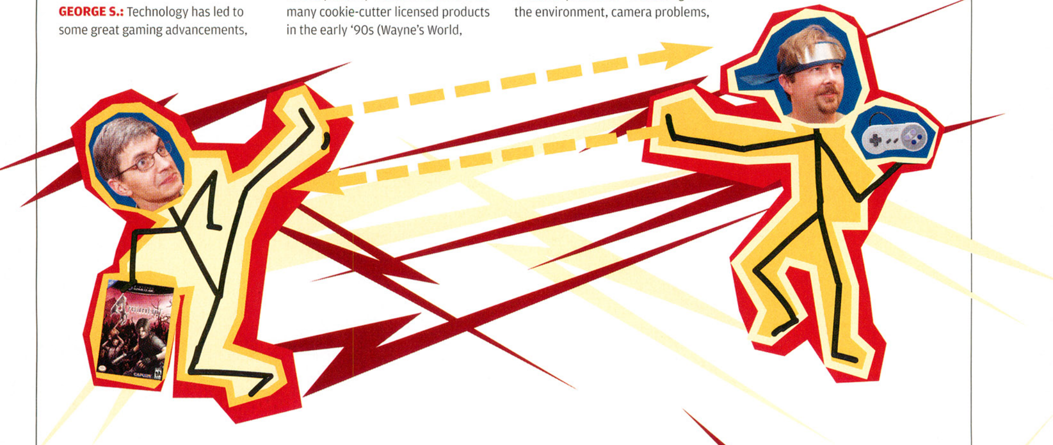
CHRIS H.: There's good stuff, to be sure, but is it better? No way. I'd say FPS and sports games have improved dramatically, but not action and adventure games. We're often getting more violence and more same-old cookie-cutter licensed products, and too many companies think this is what games are all about.

GEORGE S.: You're shining a dim light on the past, my friend. There were as many cookie-cutter licensed products in the early '90s (Wayne's World, Home Alone) as there are now. There is not enough risk-taking in big-budget titles, but the question is not, "Are games more *inventive* now?" (they probably aren't). It's, "Are they *better*?" (and they are).

> **"Technology has led to some great gaming advancements."**
> —George S.

CHRIS H.: Oh, there were plenty of bad games, but I'd certainly take Sonic CD or Super Mario World over most 3-D platformers. More variables in newer games cause more opportunities for problems—interacting with the environment, camera problems, collision issues. And let's not forget how many of those old games are being re-released or updated for current systems.

GEORGE S.: There are golden-age games that deserve to be played now, but the nostalgia factor is big, too. It's not that the games are better than those being made today. Complexity in today's titles can cause weird polygon and collision issues, but I'm glad that developers are making ambitious titles, even biting off more than they can chew. It bodes well for the future.



What genre is most in need of a tune-up?

ANDY M.: Most sports franchises peaked a few years ago. Unless you're an uberfan, the yearly updates don't make much of an impression.

CHRIS H.: If I have to pick one, then fighting. But more importantly, it's not sports. Andy, you're nuts. Sports games benefit from technology more than any other genre.

GEORGE S.: Licensed-character games are way too formulaic. Let's have more games where the gameplay really fits with the character or license.

CHRIS S.: I'd have to go with the FPS, not because they don't look good, but because the settings and stories are totally stale.

STEVE T.: I'm so tired of unimaginative games that revolve around urban violence. Forget a tune-up; just get rid of 'em.

STEVEN G.: Racing games are running on empty. I haven't felt the visceral thrill of getting behind the wheel for a long time.

BOND IS BACK!

Go deep behind enemy lines to scout every Bond Moment and boss battle as 007 returns in **From Russia with Love.**

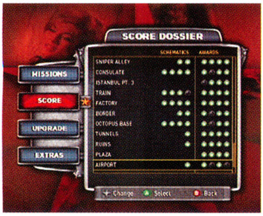
By Chris Shepperd

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE Interactive Game (all source code, all other software components and certain audiovisual components only) ©2005 Electronic Arts Inc. All rights reserved. FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE Interactive Game (certain audio-visual components) ©2005 Danjaq, LLC. and United Artists Corporation. All rights reserved.

POINT TAKEN

Being a spy is more than just infiltrating enemy bases and saving damsels in distress—you also gotta look good doing it. Earn award points by beating levels with Bond-like prowess. You don't have to earn all the points at once; you can play the same level multiple times with the intention of getting different award points on each pass. The points you earn will unlock bonus missions. See page 82 for details.

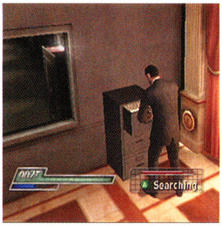


SCORE DOSSIER

	SCHEMATICS	AWARDS
SNIPER ALLEY	●●	●●●●
CONSULATE	●●●●	●○●●
ISTANBUL PT. 3		○●●●
TRAIN	●●●○	●●●●
FACTORY	●●●●	●●●●
BORDER	●●	●○●●
OCTOPUS BASE	●●●●	●○●●
TUNNELS	●	●●●●
RUINS	●	●●●●
PLAZA		●●●●
AIRPORT	●	●○●○

Check out which points you've earned already before you start a mission. You can rack up points on the bonus missions, as well—scroll to the bottom of the list to see their requirements.

Search for Schematics



Forgetful Russian spies often leave schematics out in the open—just walk up and press the action button to snag them. But sometimes you'll have to roll up your sleeves and do a little spy work; many unlocked, unguarded cabinets contain state secrets. Every bundle of schematics you find will earn you an award point.

Stay on Target

Earn an award point by disabling enemies with Bond Focus takedowns and hand-to-hand combat. Pause your game to see the score, how many bad guys you've disabled and how many more you need to disable to earn an award point.

Speed Kills

You can earn award points by beating levels as quickly as possible. The difficulty level doesn't make any difference in earning the point, so choose Operative difficulty and blast through the stages.

Harder Is Better

International superspies are always looking for a new challenge, and you should be, too. Beat a level on 00 Agent difficulty to earn an extra award point. Take note: ammo is at a premium on the hardest difficulty.

Seize the Moment

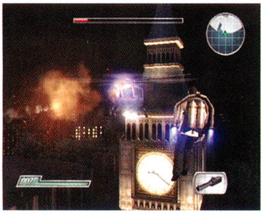
Sure, you could stick to your core objectives, but that wouldn't be very Bond-like. Earn award points by performing the Bond Moment somewhere in the level. A hint about how to perform the Bond moment appears on the Pause screen; read on for detailed directions.

007 GOT A MOMENT?

Every level has its own Bond Moment, a chance for you to show off your true 007 skills. Bond Moments often require extra exploration, which can consume quite a bit of time—if you're trying to speed through a level, skip the Bond Moment (unless it will coincidentally shave off seconds, of course). You can do Bond Moments on any difficulty setting.

LONDON

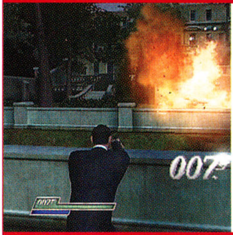
Defeat the helicopter quickly



Big Ben serves as a convenient backdrop for the time-based Bond Moment. Take out the enemy helicopter as quickly as possible to earn the award point. Fire your machine gun continuously while the gunship is maneuvering; when it's hovering, switch to missiles and start blasting.

HEDGEMAZE

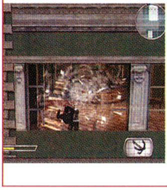
Shoot the gas can next to the car



When the mansion comes into view, the action will start to get heavy. Before crossing the bridge to the house, fire a round at the gas can to cause an explosion. It will destroy the nearby car, as well as any enemies in the vicinity.

ISTANBUL PT. 1

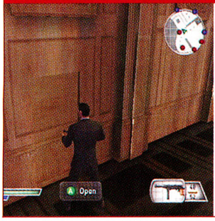
Rappel-swing through the glass into the enemy



Everything was going fine on your first trip to Istanbul until a pesky Soviet tank got in the way. When you're about to enter the last building before taking out the tank, you'll notice a soldier in the window—he's the one shooting at you. Instead of shooting him, swing through the glass and put your boots to him.

STATION T

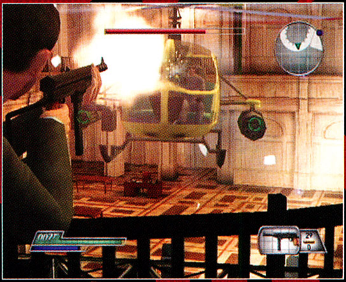
Find the secret armory

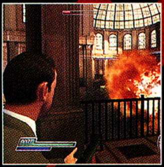


On the lower floor of the ballroom, search the wall near the large scaffolding to find an inconspicuous door. Other than earning you the Bond Moment, the payoff isn't great—you'll find extra ammo and armor inside, but little else.

HELICOPTER FIGHT

Hide behind pillars and unload on the chopper with all the ammo you've got. Slowly make your way to the bazooka. Don't stay behind one pillar for long, or the helicopter will blast your cover to pieces.

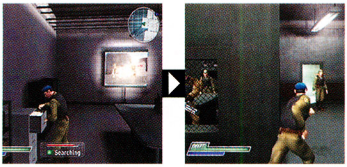




Do as much damage as you can with your normal weapons as you head toward the bazooka, then use your new weapon to finish it off. You can't aim the bazooka very accurately, so choose a moment after the helicopter has quit firing and take a high-accuracy shot.

ISTANBUL PT. 2

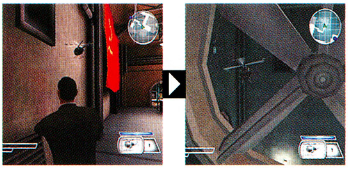
Enter the secret armory



Once you're inside the Russian office, enter the room left of the receptionist and search the file cabinet. You'll find the armory key, which will let you into an ammo-filled storage room near the rear exit.

UNDERGROUND

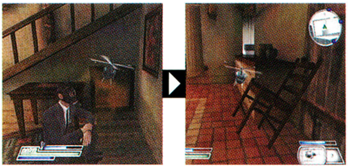
Enter the secret storage room



Locate the vent in the first room of the warehouse. Navigate a Q-Copter past the duct fans and into the storage room. Detonate the copter next to the blinking door panel to unlock the door.

GYPSY CAMP

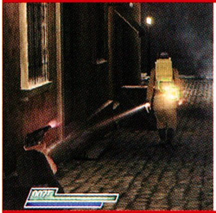
Find a way into the kitchen



Grab a gas mask and enter the largest building. Send a Q-Copter into the vent next to the door to the kitchen. Blow up the chair against the door before the soldier can destroy the copter.

SNIPER ALLEY

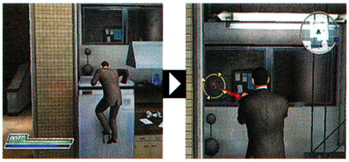
Disable the radio soldier before he calls for backup



At the very beginning of the level, peek over the wall and wait for the patrolling soldier to turn his back on you. Equip your pistol and shoot the radio off his hip with a Bond Focus shot to prevent him from calling in reinforcements. Even after you've disabled the radio, you won't be awarded the Bond Moment until you've offed the soldier.

CONSULATE

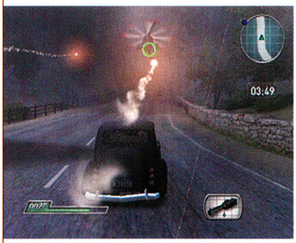
Enter the secret room



In the first gas-filled room in the sub-basement, climb on top of the refrigerator and fry the break-room door panel with your laser watch. Enter the room to earn the Bond Moment.

ISTANBUL PT. 3

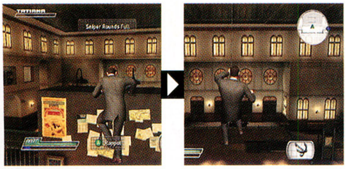
Destroy the helicopter



After you've destroyed 30 cars (and made an awful mess of downtown Istanbul), you'll hit the road leading toward the airport. When the helicopter shows up, switch to guided missiles and lock onto the chopper. It should take only a couple of direct hits to bring the bird down.

TRAIN

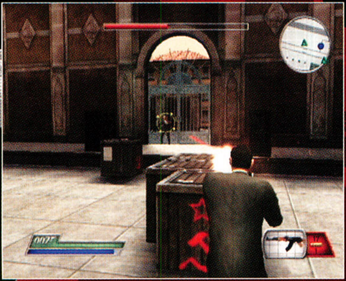
Enter the gift shop



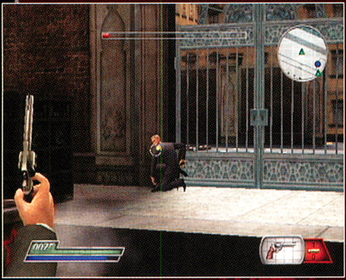
On the second floor of the train-station lobby, climb on top of the arrival-and-departure sign, then swing across to the kiosk. Drop through the ceiling hatch to enter the gift shop.

SHOWDOWN WITH RED GRANT

Just before you can get out of the train station, Red Grant will block your escape. If you plan on snagging the Lektor device and getting out of the Soviet Bloc, you're going to have to go through him. Armed with a powerful assault rifle, hand grenades and a really big chip on his shoulder, Grant will stop at nothing to take you out. Stay moving to avoid his constant fire, and use special ammo to cause extra damage.



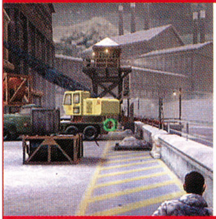
Fire at Red Grant from behind the crates in the courtyard. Watch out—he'll lob grenades to flush you out, destroying the crates in the process. Use your evasive roll to avoid the blasts.



When the targeting circle appears on Grant's shoulder, use your Bond Focus and aim for his weak spot. After every shot, the circle will move—hit all of his weak points in sequence to cause major damage.

FACTORY

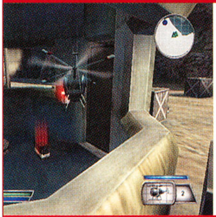
Blast the guard tower



Either get close enough to target the orange gas cans below the lakeside guard tower to send it into the icy drink, or use the Q-Copter to destroy the explosive canisters from a safe distance.

BORDER

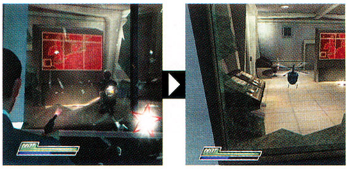
Enter the pillbox



Before heading too far onto the dock, use a Q-Copter to fly into the pillbox and blast the control panel. Enter the pillbox to earn a Bond Moment, then waste enemies with the mounted machine gun before moving on.

OCTOPUS BASE

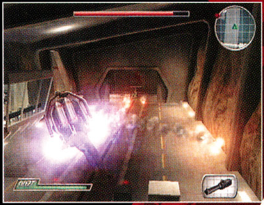
Enter the secret room in the missile silo



Blast the glass to the secret room on the upper level of the missile silo, then send a Q-Copter through the broken window to destroy the control panel next to the locked door.

BATTLE WITH EVA

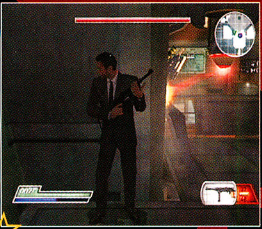
After you strap on the jet pack inside the Octopus base, Eva will start firing missiles at you from a parked plane. Take out the soldiers on the ground first, then concentrate on the evil henchwoman.



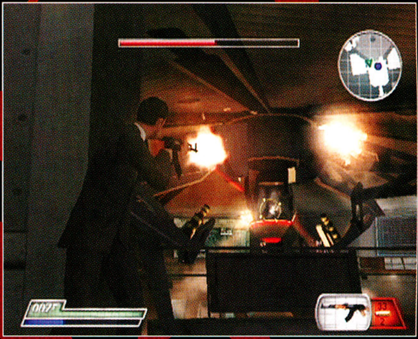
Eva will launch a string of homing missiles—wait until the last moment to dodge the projectiles.

RED GRANT RETURNS

Red Grant miraculously survived being run over by a train, only to appear again inside a giant, tentacled robot at the Octopus lab. Be sure to stock up on ammo and armor in the two side rooms. Then load your weapons with special ammo for the fight. This is the last battle—there's no need to conserve your bullets.



Keep your back against the wall in the middle of the room for cover from the machine-gun fire. Be careful of the grenades Grant tosses—one will occasionally bounce around the barrier and detonate at your feet. Take aim at Grant's cockpit as soon as the laser quits firing—it needs a few seconds to cool down before Grant can commence his next attack.



Don't bother targeting the weapons at the ends of the robotic arms—save your ammo for the cockpit itself. The armor-piercing gun is particularly accurate and powerful—use it to bring a quick end to Grant's last stand.

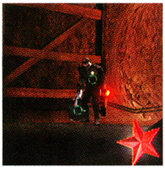
EXTRA LOVE

The big payoff for collecting the award points is four bonus missions. More shooting galleries than actual stages, the bonus missions require patience and a steady hand. Like the main levels, each bonus mission has Bond Moments for you to perform. The bonus missions can be quite tough—monitor your ammunition and health carefully.

TUNNEL

Kill the commandos

Octopus thugs have rigged the tunnel to blow—it's up to you to disarm the five explosives. Manage your ammo wisely by aiming for grenades and rockets. Time is limited—have a plan for finding all the bombs.

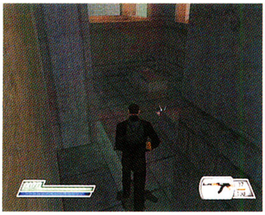


The Bond Moment requires you to take out all of the chain-gun-wielding commandos. Start by shooting their shoulders to sever the straps that hold their armor in place, then attack the main part of the body when the commando moves his arm. The commandos do a ton of damage—look for any available cover in the narrow passageways.

RUINS

Enter the secret room

The Ruins is a long battle with many enemies. Take advantage of your entire arsenal. The dart gun is especially handy in crowded hallways. There is no time limit—move methodically and be sure not to get caught in a crossfire.

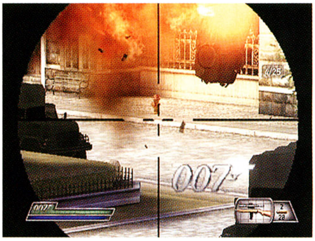


After you lower the ground in the main room for the first time, head out into the large chamber and go to the far right-side wall. Climb up the narrow ledge and sneak behind the far wall to grab some supplies and earn a Bond Moment.

PLAZA

Defeat all of the commandos

Enemy soldiers have got you cornered on a balcony—snag your sniper rifle and pick 'em off as they approach. Crouch and hug the back wall to avoid taking too many hits. Don't stay zoomed in all the time—you'll lose the big picture of what's going on. Enemies who fire on you from behind cover are the biggest threat because they're hard to see—don't let them get settled in, or they will be hard to hit.

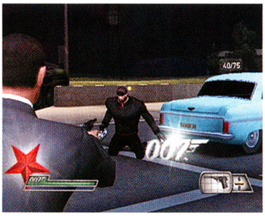


When you see the car pass by, plug it with as many rounds as you can. You'll earn a bond moment by destroying it. Hopefully, the explosion will also take out a few bad guys.

AIRPORT

Disable 40 enemies without armor

Enemy thugs catch up to you at the airport just before you can escape to freedom. Stay on the move and use the cars for cover. The targeting system will often find bad guys before you can actually see them—keep retargeting to locate enemies. The more opponents you take down, the tougher the next wave will be.



Stay toward the back side of the parking lot, opposite the grassy area where most of the enemies come from, to get a good view of the combat zone. As you approach your 40th takedown, make your way toward the armor, then grab it as soon as you earn the Bond Moment.

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Harvest Moon Friends of Mineral Town
Medabots Infinity
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NINTENDO POWER

OFFICIAL MINIGUIDE

Fantasy Fulfilled

Join us for an RPG revival of epic proportions as we journey to the far corners of FINAL FANTASY IV Advance.

By Andy Myers

FF fans, you can stop holding your breath—FINAL FANTASY IV Advance for GBA is finally upon us. Not only does the game retain the aspects fans loved about the original (released in 1991 as FINAL FANTASY II in North America), it offers an experience that will be new even to the most avid fan of the series. Whether you've played the game in a previous form (on the Super NES or Sony PlayStation), or you're completely new toFFIV, rest assured—this is the quintessential version of the classic RPG.

To celebrate the release, we've prepared a miniguide of massive proportions that will keep you alive (along with a few Phoenix Downs in your inventory, of course) as you journey through the familiar and the unfamiliar landscapes.

A NEW GAME, A NEW GUIDE

For a complete walk-through of FFIV Advance, including detailed maps, loads of charts and strategy that leaves no stone unturned, get the Official Nintendo Player's Guide.

OFFICIAL GUIDE FROM NINTENDO POWER
GAME BOY ADVANCE
FANTASY IV

visit ff.nintendo.com

EVERYONE 10+
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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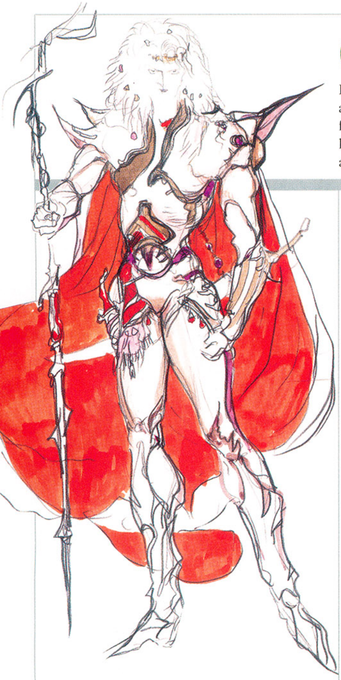
CECIL'S SECRETS

FFIV Advance for the GBA is more than just a port of its SNES form—the game has been revamped and expanded in a number of ways. In addition to retranslating the game's text (don't worry, superfans—the "Spoony Bard!" line is still in there) and greatly refining the in-game menus, Square Enix has added a number of extra features for fans to enjoy, including a full bestiary, a soundtrack player and two all-new dungeons: the Cave of Trials and Lunar Ruins.



Cave of Trials

Toward the end of the game, after you've deactivated the Giant of Babel, fans of the original game will notice something new to FFIV Advance: a voice instructing the party to return to Mysidia. Before tackling the game's final area, Lunar Subterrane, return to the overworld and visit the Hall of Prayers (located behind the Crystal Room in Mysidia). There you'll find your surviving pals—Palom, Porom, Cid, Edward and Yang—ready to rejoin the party. They will be at a much higher level than when they left your party, and will be wearing their old gear.

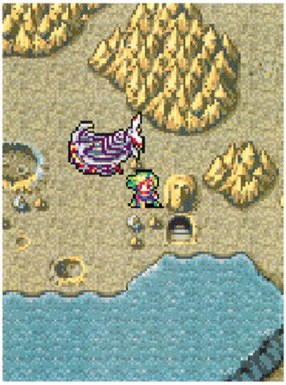
Cecil must remain the head of your party, but you can switch out all other available characters at will from this point on. Choose a party lineup, then head back to Mt. Ordeals, where you'll find the entrance to the Cave of Trials. Fight through the cave's eight levels, being sure to pick up the rare items along the way. On the lowest level of the cave, you'll find a save point, a warp to the cave's entrance and five new bosses, each holding an ultra-rare weapon. (See page 92 for more information on the bosses.) Once you've exhausted the Cave of Trials, head to the moon for the game's dramatic conclusion.

Unraveling Lunar Ruins

Once you beat the game's final boss and watch the credits roll for the first time, an entrance leading underground to Lunar Ruins will appear on the surface of the moon, below a small stone shaped like a face. Lunar Ruins is a massive dungeon that generates randomly each time you enter it. You'll find some of the game's rarest items and monsters in Lunar Ruins, as well as intriguing story elements pertaining to all 10 surviving party members.

Only the Beginning

Lunar Ruins will become available immediately after you finish the main game. Be sure to save your game after defeating the final boss, then load the save file. You'll need to make your way back to the Lunar Whale, then find the entrance to Lunar Ruins. To experience all that Lunar Ruins has to offer, you must play through Lunar Subterrane (the game's final level) and defeat Zeromus at least once with every party member.

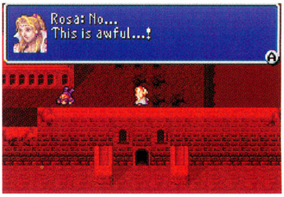


Enter the Ruins

Lunar Ruins starts off fairly easy. Search for chests and hidden passages on each floor while finding your way to the floor's exit. Many areas have a variety of randomly encountered monsters that are exclusive to Lunar Ruins. As you progress from floor to floor, you'll eventually come across one with a save point, a warp to the dugeon's entrance and a white door. The white door leads to one of the dungeon's event floors. Each event floor is accessible only if you have a specific character in your party, and if that character was also in your party when you defeated Zeromus.

Special Events

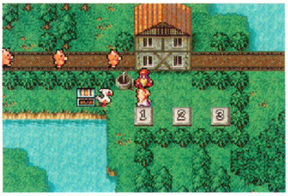
The event floors are the hardest areas in Lunar Ruins, but also the most rewarding. Each event floor is specific to one of your party members, revealing new story elements about that character. Always save before entering an event floor, as you'll often encounter a difficult boss before all is said and done.



Rosa: No...
This is awful...!

Puzzle-Solving

As you continue through the random floors of Lunar Ruins, you'll encounter many puzzle floors. Some require memorizing a string of numbers, while others put your observation skills to the test. If you solve a puzzle, you'll be allowed to move on to the next floor, and will often be rewarded with an item.



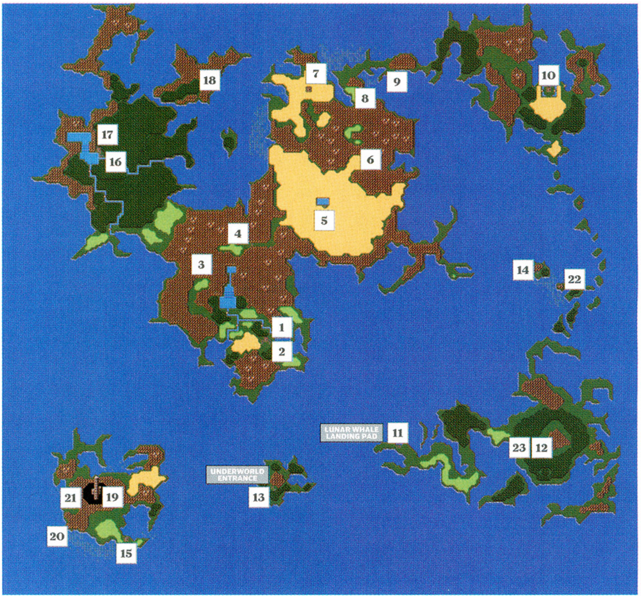
Floors of Remembrance

Throughout Lunar Ruins, you'll come across floors of remembrance. These floors usually resemble areas from previous dungeons in the game, though some are noncombat areas such as towns (where you can buy new items) or Chocobo Forests (where you can replenish your MP). Though floors of remembrance may look familiar, don't rush through them—they often hold new enemies and items.

THE WORLD AND BEYOND

As your adventure progresses, FFIV Advance's world is revealed piece by piece until you're traveling freely by airship across the planet's entire surface, to the underworld and even to the moon. Here you'll find all of the game's locations called out in the order you will first visit them, as well as a strategy tip for each area to keep you on the right track.

The Overworld

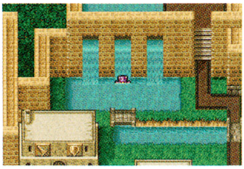


1 Castle Baron

Castle Baron serves as Cecil's home and the starting point for your adventure, though you'll return to it many times. Before embarking on your first mission, have Cecil loot the castle for treasure.

2 Baron

Before heading off to Mist Cave, have Kain and Cecil stop in the town of Baron to stock up on items. The city is also full of hidden treasures, including a tent and an hourglass in the pool of water near the southeast corner of town.



3 Mist Cave

On the king's orders, Kain and Cecil must fight through Mist Cave and defeat the game's first boss, the Mist Dragon.

4 Mist

After defeating the dragon, young Rydia of Mist will join your party. The path to Mist will be blocked due to an earthquake, but you'll be able to visit what's left of the town later in the game, after acquiring the airship.

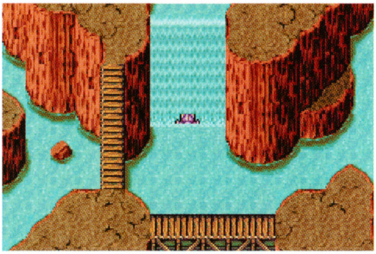
5 Kaipo

In the desert town of Kaipo, while resting at the inn, you'll be attacked in the night by Baron troops. The next day, stock up on items then head to the home in the northeast corner to find the sickly Rosa.

...Oh! She looks very pale. Is she alright? Get her to a bed, quickly! She can rest here, free of charge.

6 Underground Waterway

Before entering the Underground Waterway, level Rydia up a bit—her Thunder spell will come in handy against the dungeon's enemies. On the first floor, after Tellah joins the party, head east to find a way into the water and collect three valuable items near the waterfall.



7 Damcyan Castle

When you reach Damcyan Castle, Prince Edward will join your party and bring along his useful hovercraft. Search the castle for treasure, then use Eddie's hovercraft to transport your party across the shallow water to the east—there you'll find Antlion Cave.

8 Antlion Cave

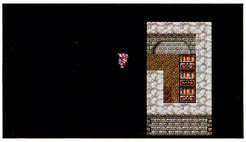
Defeat the Antlion in the depths of the cave to obtain the Sand Ruby, which you must rush back to Rosa in Kaipo.

9 Mt. Hobs

With Rosa now in your party, use the hovercraft to reach Mt. Hobs. Fire spells are a great asset on the undead-infested mountain.

10 Fabul Castle

At Fabul Castle, you must fight alongside Yang's people, who will reward you with the powerful Deathbringer sword. When searching the castle for treasure, look for a secret passage on the east side of the throne room.



11 Mysidia

You'll visit Mysidia many times throughout your quest. On your first visit, be sure to stock up on armor and weapons (including the Flame Rod) for Palom and Porom—they'll need the help on Mt. Ordeals.

12 Mt. Ordeals

Mt. Ordeals is where Cecil will shed his Dark Knight status and become a Paladin. Level up Palom and Porom before ascending the mountain, and use the Chocobo Forest directly south to regain lost MP. After defeating Scarmiglione, Cecil must face his dark self in battle. Do not attack—simply defend until the battle concludes.

13 Agart

After returning to Castle Baron via Devil's Road in Mysidia, you can access Agart using the airship. Later in the game, after the Tower of Zot, drop the Magma Rock in Agart's well to open the entrance to the underworld.

14 Mythril

The tiny town of Mythril can be accessed via airship. Mythril offers powerful but expensive weapons and armor for sale and for the finding.

15 Eblan Castle

The deserted Eblan Castle is full of treasures and monsters. Save before you go in, and search the castle thoroughly for hidden passages.

16 Troia

While in Troia, stock up on nonmetal weapons and armor—you'll need them in the near future. Use the waterways to reach the northernmost portion of town, and find the hidden items.

17 Troia Castle

After speaking with Edward and gaining the Twin Harp, head north by foot to the Chocobo Forest. Temporarily equip your party with nonmetal weapons and armor, grab hold of a Black Chocobo and head west to the Magnetic Cave.

Edward: This is the only way I can be of any help right now.

18 Magnetic Cave

Fight your way through the Magnetic Cave as best you can without the aid of metal. If necessary, level up your party outside the cave. When facing the Dark Elf, be prepared to rearm your party with metal weapons and armor from your inventory once Edward disables the magnetic field.

The Twin Harp sounds the melody from Edward's harp.

19 Tower of Zot

From Troia, your party will be led to the Tower of Zot by none other than Kain. Search the tower thoroughly for treasure before taking on Barbariccia. After defeating her, head back to Agart with the Magma Rock to access the underworld—the Dwarven Castle is your next stop.

20 Cave of Eblan

After defeating Dr. Lugae in the underworld and upgrading your airship to carry the hovercraft, you'll be able to access the Cave of Eblan, where you'll meet Edge the Ninja and find passage to the overworld portion of Babel Tower.

21 Babel Tower: Overworld

Before entering Babel Tower, level up your new recruit, Edge. Collect the tower's treasures (including 82,000 gil in a chest just west of Rubicante). You'll find yourself back in the underworld.

22 Adamant Grotto

If you've visited the Cave of Summons and aquired the Rat Tail, bring it to Adamant Grotto—you can trade it for Adamantite, a material that you can take to Kokkol's Smithy to forge the powerful Excalibur sword.

23 Cave of Trials

Visiting the Cave of Trials is optional—see page 85 for details.

The Underworld

Dwarf Castle

You'll return to the Dwarf Castle many times before your journey's end. On your first visit, you'll battle Golbez behind the Dwarven King's throne, then access an underground passage that leads to Babel Tower.

Babel Tower: Underworld

In the underworld portion of Babel Tower, you must defeat Dr. Lugae then use his key to destroy the tower's cannons. Once you're back in the overworld, return to Castle Baron.

Tomra

After finishing the overworld portion of Babel Tower and returning to the underworld, visit Tomra to upgrade your party's equipment.

Sylvan Cave

Visiting Sylvan Cave is optional, but you'll find great treasures and a new Summon spell for Rydia. Rosa's Float spell (which she'll learn at level 35) is essential to avoiding damage from the cave's acidic surface.

Cave of Summons

The Cave of Summons, though an optional stop, is necessary for Rydia to learn the Asura and Leviathan summons. You'll also find the Rat Tail, which is essential for forging Excalibur.

Sealed Cavern

You'll need to get Luca's Necklace from King Giott before entering the Sealed Cavern and facing the Demon Wall.

Kokkol's Smithy

Trade the Rat Tail for the Adamantite, and bring it to Kokkol's Smithy to forge Excalibur.

The Moon

Hummingway Home

After acquiring the *Lunar Whale* in Mysidia, the moon will be available for travel. Visit the Hummingway Home to buy rare items such as Dry Ethers, Elixirs and Gysahl Whistles.

Lunar Path

Because of the moon's rough surface, you must traverse the Lunar Path to reach the entrance to the Crystal Palace.

Crystal Palace

On your first visit to the Crystal Palace, FuSoYa will join your party. You'll return to the palace later to discover the entrance to the game's final area, Lunar Subterrane.

Cave of Bahamut

Just east of the Crystal Palace lies the optional Cave of Bahamut, where you can learn Rydia's final Summon spell. Before leaving the moon with FuSoYa onboard the *Lunar Whale*, revisit the Hummingway Home to stock up on items—the Giant of Babel in the Overworld is your next destination.

Lunar Ruins

Lunar Ruins will open to you after you defeat Zeromus in Lunar Subterrane and complete the game—see page 85 for more details.

SKIP TO THE HARD PARTS

Much of FFIV Advance involves traveling from town to town and engaging in random battles, but nearly every phase of your quest ends in at least one fixed boss battle. Some bosses are more difficult than others, but there's a right way and a wrong way to fight each one. We've organized the entire game by boss battles to give you an advantage during the game's most-difficult moments.

Cecil's To-Do List

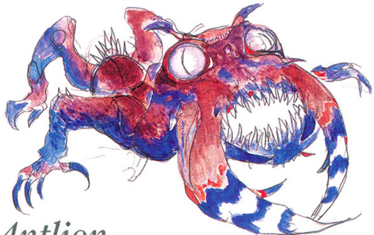
Castle Baron	
Baron	
Mist Cave	Mist Dragon
Kaipo	
Underground Waterway	Octomammoth
Damcyan Castle	
Antlion Cave	Antlion
Mt. Hobs	Mom Bomb
Fabul Castle	
Mysidia	
Mt. Ordeals	Scarmiglione
Waterways of Baron	Baigan, Cagnazzo
Mist	
Agart	
Mythril	
Eblan Castle	
Troia	
Troia Castle	
Magnetic Cave	Dark Elf, Dark Dragon
Tower of Zot	Magus Sisters & Barbariccia
Dwarven Castle	Calcobrena, Golbez & Shadow Dragon
Babel Tower	Dr. Lugae, Barnabas
Castle Baron	
Cave of Eblan	
Babel Tower	Rubicante
Tomra	
Sealed Cavern	Demon Wall
Sylvan Cave	
Cave of Summons	
Land of Summons	Asura, Leviathan
Adamant Grotto	
Kokkol's Smithy	
Castle Baron	Odin
Hummingway Home	
Lunar Path	
Crystal Palace	
Cave of Bahamut	Bahamut
Giant of Babel	Elemental Lords, CPU
Cave of Trials	Death Mech, Storm Dragon, Master Flan, Gigas Worm, T-Rex
Lunar Subterrane	White Dragon, Dark Bahamut, Lunasaur, Plague, Ogopogo, Zeromus

Mist Dragon

HP: 465 WEAKNESS: NONE

The Mist Dragon resides in Mist Cave, and must be defeated for Cecil and Kain to fulfill their duty to the king. When the dragon changes to its mist form, attacking it will only provoke a deadly counterattack. Wait until it changes back to its regular form, then pound the dragon with physical attacks from Cecil and Jump attacks from Kain.

Mist Dr
Attack
Jump
Items
Kain 161
Cecil 178



Antlion

HP: 1,100 WEAKNESS: NONE

You can avoid the evil Antlion's devastating counterattack by refraining from using physical attacks. Have Cecil either defend or attack using Dark while Edward heals the party. Summoning Chocobo a few times with Rydia will easily fell the horrid beast.

Octomammoth

HP: 2,350 WEAKNESSES: DARK, THUNDER

The Octomammoth in the Underground Waterway will protect itself with its eight long tentacles. Defeat each tentacle one by one using Cecil's sword attacks and Thunder spells courtesy of Tellah and Rydia, then strike the beast its final blow.

Mom Bomb

HP: 11,000 WEAKNESS: NONE

After a few rounds, the Mom Bomb will assume its true form: a big, cuddly-looking ball of flaming gas. Once it does, attack the fiery beast with Rydia's Chocobo summon until you see the explosion warning. Have Rosa heal the party to prepare for the explosion, then attack the six smaller portions with Cecil's Dark attack and Yang's Kick attack.

Mom Bor
Attack
Dark
Items
Rydia 190
Rosa 146
Cecil 309
Yang 212
Edward 75

Scarmiglione

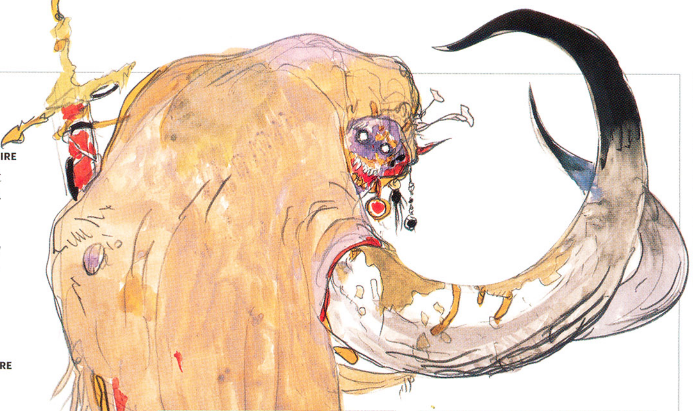
SCARMIGLIONE HP: 3,500 WEAKNESS: FIRE
SKULLNANTS HP: 200 WEAKNESSES: HOLY, FIRE

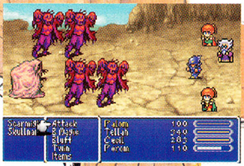
Take out Scarmiglione's four Skullnants first by casting Fire spells with Tellah and Palom. When only Scarmiglione is left, attack the wretched creature with Fire spells and Cecil's sword, having Porom heal your party constantly to counter the creature's powerful magic attacks.

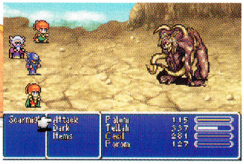
Part 2

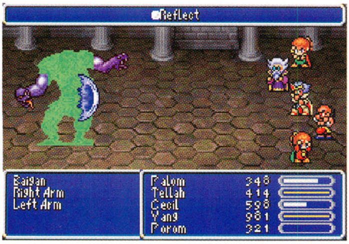
SCARMIGLIONE
HP: 3,523 WEAKNESSES: PROJECTILE, HOLY, FIRE

Do not continue across the bridge. Instead, head back to the save point and use a tent, then access the Row command to switch your party's configuration, moving your magic users to the front line—Scarmiglione will attack your party from behind once you cross the bridge. Attack the revived beast just like you did the first time (with fire spells and physical attacks), while having Porom keep the party healthy.




Scarmigl
Skullnan
Attack
B Magic
Bluff
Twin
Items
Palom 100
Tellah 240
Cecil 283
Porom 110


Scarmigl
Attack
Dark
Items
Palom 115
Tellah 337
Cecil 281
Porom 127


Reflect
Baigan
Right Arm
Left Arm
Palom 348
Tellah 414
Cecil 598
Yang 981
Porom 321

Baigan

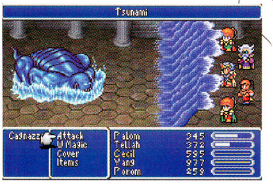
HP: 4,444 WEAKNESS: NONE

Back at Castle Baron, rest in Cecil's old room before confronting Baigan's monstrous form. Rather than focusing on the boss's arms (which will regenerate if both are destroyed), focus on its body first. Right out of the gate, hit Baigan hard with a powerful spell—he'll cast Reflect on himself immediately afterward. Take him down the rest of the way with strong physical attacks.

Cagnazzo

HP: 5,312 WEAKNESS: THUNDER

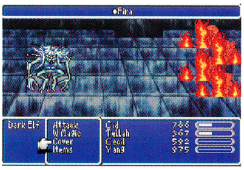
Cagnazzo, the lord of water, will unleash waves of Tsunami attacks on your party. Have Porom (and Cecil, if necessary) heal your party while Tellah and Palom pummel the fiend with Thundara and Thundaga spells. Equip Yang with the Thunder Claw and attack Cagnazzo to further exploit the creature's weakness to Thunder.


Tsunami
Cagnazz
Attack
W Magic
Cover
Items
Palom 345
Tellah 372
Cecil 595
Yang 977
Porom 259

Dark Elf

HP: 23,890 WEAKNESS: HOLY

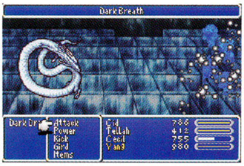
Your first encounter with the Dark Elf will end in defeat, so don't even bother trying to win. Edward will come to the rescue with the Twin Harp, at which time you'll be able to re-equip your metallic weapons and armor. After this occurs, have Tellah cast Reflect on as many party members as possible.


Fira
Dark Elf
Attack
W Magic
Cover
Items
Cid 786
Tellah 367
Cecil 592
Yang 975

Part 2, Dark Dragon

HP: 3,927 WEAKNESS: NONE

Once the Dark Elf is toast, it will transform into the deadly Dark Dragon. Have Tellah focus on healing the party (magic attacks are almost useless against the dragon), while the rest of your party slays the mighty beast with physical attacks.


Dark Breath
Dark Dr
Attack
Power
Kick
Gird
Items
Cid 786
Tellah 412
Cecil 755
Yang 980

Magus Sisters

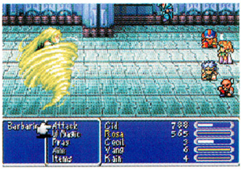
SANDY HP: 2,591 WEAKNESS: NONE
CINDY HP: 4,599 WEAKNESS: NONE
MINDY HP: 2,590 WEAKNESS: NONE

Spell-casting mayhem will ensue as the Magus Sisters cast Reflect not only on the middle sister, but on your party members as well, causing spells to bounce back and forth. Use physical attacks to eliminate the healer of the three, the middle sister, then focus on the other two brats.

Barbariccia

HP: 8,636 WEAKNESS: NONE

Rosa's white magic is crucial in defeating Barbariccia—the beast's Tornado spell will decimate your party's HP throughout the battle. Have Rosa cast her most powerful Cure spell on injured allies, as well as the Protect spell if time allows. When the wind goddess's protective barrier is active, she'll be invulnerable to all attacks other than Kain's Jump attack. Wait for Kain to land his attack and reopen Barbariccia's barrier, then attack her swiftly with physical attacks from Cecil, Cid and Yang while Rosa continues to support the boys.



Golbez

GOLBEZ
HP: 23,001 WEAKNESSES: FIRE, HOLY

SHADOW DRAGON
HP: 1 WEAKNESS: NONE

You can't accomplish much against Golbez during the first part of the battle—his summoned Shadow Dragon will begin taking out your party members one by one using Black Fang. Try jumping with Kain—if you're lucky, he'll be safe in the air and avoid the Shadow Dragon's deadly attack. Once a grown-up Rydia rejoins the party, summon the Titan to turn the tables and gain the upper hand.

Calcobrena

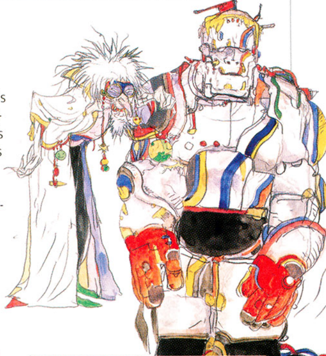
CALCO HP: 1,369 WEAKNESS: NONE
BRINA HP: 369 WEAKNESS: NONE
CALCOBRENA: HP: 5,315 WEAKNESS: NONE

Fighting against dolls is just plain creepy. At the battle's start, you'll face six dolls: three Calcos, and three Brinas. Take out the front-row dolls (the Brinas) first—they are just as dangerous as the Calcos, but much easier to defeat. When The remaining dolls unite Voltron-style into Calcobrena, take the freaky creature down using Rosa's Aim attack, Yang's Power attack and Kain's Jump attack.

Dr. Lugae

DR. LUGAE HP: 4,936 WEAKNESS: NONE
BARNABAS HP: 4,832 WEAKNESS: NONE

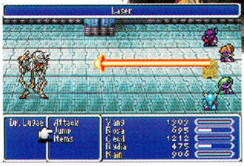
Whether you take out the crazy doctor or his disturbing creation first, your party will suffer some consequences—the best solution is to defeat them both simultaneously. Rydia's Titan summon can accomplish this task. Have your other party members defend while Rosa heals the injured and Rydia summons. After a few rounds, the evil pair will go down together.



Part 2

DR. LUGAE HP: 9,321 WEAKNESS: THUNDER

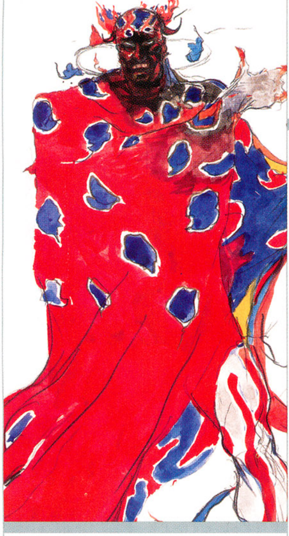
Dr. Lugae will immediately return for round two, this time as a monster. He'll poison your entire party, but don't bother using Antidotes—he'll remove the status effect a few rounds later. Have Rosa cast her most-powerful Cure spells while Rydia summons Ramuh and the rest pound the doctor with their best physical attacks.



Rubicante

HP: 34,000 WEAKNESS: ICE

Defeating the elemental lord Rubicante is all about timing. The demon's cloak will open and close as he rains Fire spells on your party. Hit him with Water spells such as Rydia's Shiva and Edge's Flood when his cloak is open, but beware—if your spells land on Rubicante while his cloak is closed, it will heal him! Have Cecil (equipped with the Ice Brand) and Kain (equipped with the Ice Spear) attack Rubicante nonstop, regardless of his cloak state, while Rosa keeps the party healthy.



Demon Wall

HP: 28,000 WEAKNESS: NONE

After obtaining the final Dark Crystal in the Sealed Cavern, your party's exit strategy will be thwarted by the nasty Demon Wall. The giant wall will move in on your party, crushing each character one by one. As soon as the battle starts, have Rosa cast Slow on the wall and Haste on Rydia. Have Rydia summon the Leviathan (if she can) or cast Bio, while Edge throws projectiles such as Fuma Shuriken at the blockhead.

Crush
Demon W
Attack
W.Magic
Cover
Items
Edge 0
Rosa 1004
Cecil 1432
Rydia 0
Kain 1296

Asura

HP: 31,005 WEAKNESS: NONE

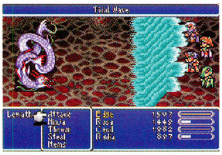
You must defeat Asura in the Cave of Summons before she'll allow Rydia to use her in battle. Asura's fond of casting recovery spells on herself—Have Rosa cast Reflect on the queen to redirect her spells onto your party. After that, hit Asura with physical attacks and Rydia's summons (Titan is particularly effective), while Rosa focuses on healing.

Curaja
Asura
Attack
Defend
Ninja
Throw
Steal
Items
Cecil
Rydia
1508
1449
1884
897

Leviathan

HP: 50,001 WEAKNESS: THUNDER

Thunder spells will work nicely against the Leviathan, king of summons—have Rydia summon Ramuh while Edge casts Blitz on the beast. Remove any ice-based weapons and armor from Cecil and Kain before the battle, and equip Cecil with the Defender, a sword that you'll find by using a secret passage on level B3 in the Cave of Summons.


Tidal Wave
Leviath
Attack
Ninja
Throw
Steal
Items
Edge 1507
Rosa 1449
Cecil 1882
Rydia 897

Odin

HP: 20,001 WEAKNESS: THUNDER

Odin is an optional boss that you can face in Castle Baron after visiting the Land of Summons. Odin is weak to Thunder—have Rydia cast Thundara and have Edge cast Blitz. On the fourth turn, Odin will perform Zantetsuken, which will destroy your entire party with one blow. You must defeat Odin before turn four—if you do, you'll earn Odin's summon spell for Rydia.

Zantetsuken
Odin
Attack
Ninja
Throw
Steal
Items
Edge 1445
Rosa 382
Cecil 1924
Rydia 835

Bahamut

HP: 45,001 WEAKNESS: NONE

To fight Bahamut in his cave on the moon, you must have already defeated the Leviathan. Bahamut will count down from five—when he reaches zero, he'll cast Mega Flare, a spell that will kill everyone in your party. As soon as the battle begins, cast Reflect or use Light Curtains to protect your party members and reflect the spell back to Bahamut. Defeating the beast will earn Rydia the ability to summon Bahamut in battle.

Mega Flare
Bahamut
Attack
Ninja
Throw
Steal
Items
Edge 1439
Rosa 378
Cecil 1916
Rydia 829

Elemental Lords

HP: 50,000/60,000 WEAKNESS: VARIES

Inside the Giant of Babel, you must face all four Elemental Lords again. Each is stronger than before, but has the same weaknesses—attack Scarmiglione with Firaga, Rubicante with Blizzaga and Cagnazzo with Thundaga. Barbariccia still has no particular weakness, but she is no longer protected by her barrier of hair—hit her hard and consistently with physical attacks and summons to bring down the beastly beauty.

CPU

HP: 30,000 (PLUS 3,000 FOR EACH NODE) WEAKNESS: NONE

The CPU is accompanied by an Attack Node and a Defense Node. If you destroy both nodes, the CPU will perform a Globe 199 attack twice, killing two of your party members. The Defense Node heals the CPU frequently, so take it down first. Next, hit only the CPU with physical attacks (all spells will be reflected back onto your party). Lastly, take out the pesky Attack Node.

Globe 199
CPU
Attack
Ninja
Throw
Steal
Items
Edge 1716
Rosa 1600
Cecil 1924
Rydia 980
FuSoYa 1696

BOSSES OF THE CAVE OF TRIALS

Each of the five bosses on the lowest floor of the Cave of Trials (explained on page 85) is associated with one of your newly available party members and carries a one-of-a-kind weapon of great power. The corresponding character must be present when your party approaches a monster, or the boss will not engage you in battle. After fighting each boss, use the nearby save point to replenish your party, and use the warp point to return to Mysidia and recruit needed party members. You must visit the cave multiple times to gain access to all five bosses.

Death Mech

CID'S BOSS - THOR'S HAMMER

The easternmost island is home to the lethal but slow Death Mech. Pound the creature with physical attacks and powerful spells such as Blizzaga and Firaga—it'll go down in no time, and you'll gain the mighty Thor's Hammer for Cid to use.

Storm Dragon

YANG'S BOSS - HAND OF THE GODS

Located on the island below the Death Mech, the Storm Dragon is probably the easiest boss in the cave. Expoit its weakness to Ice by casting Blizzaga, and have a healer ready when the Storm Dragon casts Tornado on your party.

Master Flan

PALOM'S BOSS - TRITON'S DAGGER

Just west of the center island, you'll find the Master Flan. First eliminate three of the four flans surrounding the boss by using Palom's magic (if you kill all four, their master will regenerate the bunch), and have the rest of the party use physical attacks on the boss.

Gigas Worm

EDWARD'S BOSS - APOLLO'S HARP

On the island south of the Master Flan lies the Gigas Worm. Each time you attack, the Gigas Worm will retaliate, so don't bother attacking with weaker fighters like Edward. Hit the boss with strong magic spells and physical attacks to earn Apollo's Harp.

T-Rex

POROM'S BOSS - SERAPHIM'S MACE

Before taking on the tough T-Rex (located north of the center island), have Porom cast Float on the party to protect it from the creature's Quake spell. Hit the T-Rex with Firaga, Blizzaga and physical attacks while Porom works hard at healing the party.

White Dragon

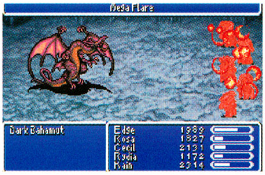
HP: 32,700 WEAKNESS: NONE

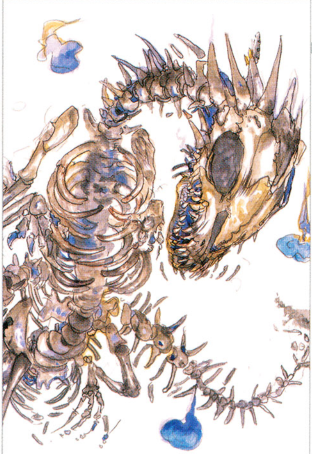
The first boss of the Lunar Subterrane, the White Dragon holds a weapon that Edge can use called the Murasame. Cast Float on your party before approaching the beast—its Quake spell will decimate you otherwise. Avoid using elemental attacks—rather, pummel the dragon with the Bahamut summon, physical attacks and the Bio spell.

Dark Bahamut

HP: 60,000 WEAKNESS: NONE

The easiest way to defeat the very difficult Dark Bahamut (guardian of the essential Ragnarok sword) is to whittle down its HP with only physical attacks while healing your party like crazy. Otherwise, you'll face the fiend's counterattacks.





Lunasaur

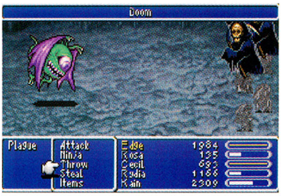
HP: 23,000 WEAKNESS: FIRE

Before reaching Zeromus's lair, you'll face two Lunasaurs. The beasts are weak to Fire, but will cast Reflect on themselves early on. Instead of spells, hit them with Cecil's Ragnarok, Kain's Holy Lance and Yang's Hand of the Gods to deal massive amounts of damage.

Plague

HP: 33,333 WEAKNESS: THROW

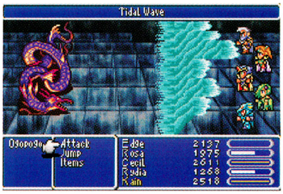
Plague will attack only once, casting Doom on your entire party. As the timer counts back from 10, hit Plague with everything you've got, exploiting its vulnerability to projectile weapons in the process. Equip bows to capable party members and fire Artemis Arrows at the boss while Edge uses his Throw command (if projectiles are available).



Ogopogo

HP: 50,000 WEAKNESS: NONE

Ogopogo is one tough beast, and will push your party's healing skills to the limit. Hit Ogopogo with physical attacks and Rydia's Bahamut summon while having White Mages heal the party whenever possible using Curaja. Rydia may need to take a break from attacking and summon Sylph or Asura to chip in on the healing front.



The Final Fight

The five Lunar Subterrane bosses we covered on this page are optional, but you'll need the weapons and experience earned from the battles when you move through the last few areas toward the game's final boss, Zeromus. Good luck!

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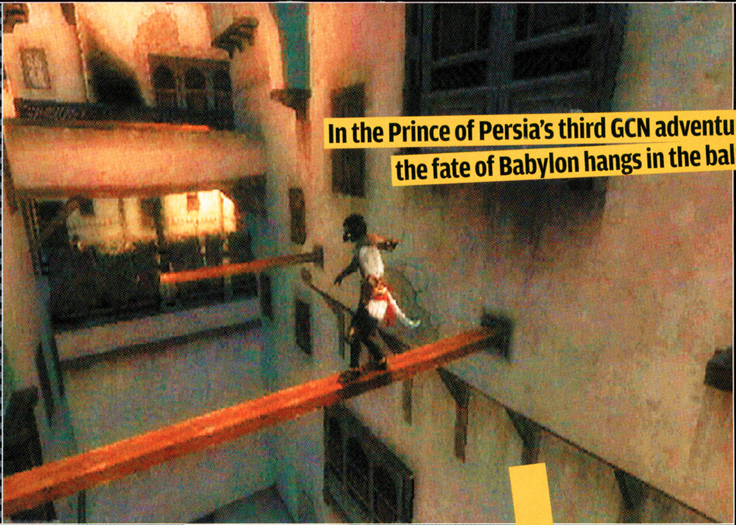
REVIEWS

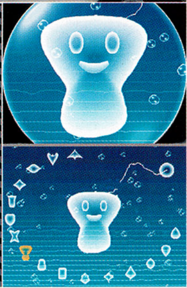
In-depth reviews of the latest games



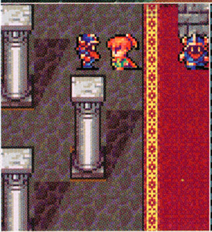
In the Prince of Persia's third GCN adventure, the fate of Babylon hangs in the balance.

+ Peter Jackson's King Kong, Top Spin 2 and more.

102
Epic and action-packed—there's nothing small about Big Red One.



99
Music and image onslaught Electroplankton has us mesmerized.



101
Does classic role-playing stand the test of time?

BEYOND GOOD

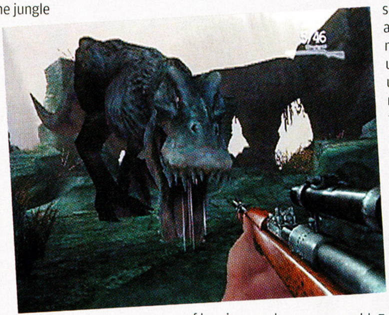
ALL THE RAGE

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft**
DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft Montpellier**
ESRB: **Teen**

Any reservations that you may have about movie-to-game adaptations—the often hastily assembled by-the-numbers titles that seem to be just another cog in a film's marketing machine—should be put aside for Michel Ancel's (Rayman, Beyond Good & Evil) near-perfect take on Peter Jackson's *King Kong* remake. Mainly a first-person adventure, the game follows Jack Driscoll (voiced by Adrien Brody) on a tense journey into the depths of dinosaur-ridden Skull Island, while a handful of third-person-perspective chapters center on the island's chief resident, Kong. What makes the game a marvel is its ability to immerse you in Driscoll's dire circumstances (and those of fellow survivors voiced by Naomi Watts and Jack Black, among others) by limiting standard video game gimmicks. You can toggle on a graphic that shows the state of your weapons and ammunition, but other HUD elements, such as a health meter, are nowhere to be found (red flashes indicate low health; you can recover by resting). You find levers to open doors, burn brush to clear paths and either distract or defeat creatures—all activities that feel natural in the jungle environment that covers 32 of the game's 33 action-oriented chapters (the finale takes place in the streets of New York). Ammunition is very hard to come by on the island, so you must ignore your impulse to fill every enemy with lead—an activity that we've experienced too much in lesser titles. Instead, you'll have to rely on clever ways to avoid becoming dinner for a dino, such as spearing a giant dragonfly and tossing it in one direction, to make enemies chase after it, while you run the opposite way. The tension builds, especially after you've been caught by a few of the nasty beasts, and a fear for what's behind every corner creeps into your mind as your ammo supply diminishes.



The environments are packed with rocks and foliage, making narrow ledges and cave openings sometimes difficult to find. But luckily, you have computer-controlled partners to show you the way. Their verbal reactions to your movement aren't always spot-on (they may tell you to follow them while they're actually following you, for example), but the characters are more of a help than a hindrance overall—for instance, Hayes (Evan Parke) will hand over weapons if you ask him for them, and that will save your hide more than a few times—and some of Black's commentary is downright hilarious.

At key points in the story, Kong appears on the scene and game control switches to him. The sense of scale is amazing as you lumber through gullies as the 25-foot-tall ape, swing on ledges and climb vine-covered walls, but the monkey levels are much more linear than the human-scaled chapters. Like a caged animal, you're very aware of barriers, and you often wish you could break out into the open when there's only one way to go. Fighting is limited, too. Kong is so powerful that you can get through most battles by whipping him into a frenzy via repeated Y Button presses, then slapping around the enemies—even the ones that are as big as the ape himself. The battles are presented artfully (you'll see momentarily frozen images that look like photographic negatives when you get in a good hit with Rage-mode-enabled Kong), but the handful of monkey-versus-monster fights don't progress in difficulty as the game goes on. The progression of Jack Driscoll levels, however, is flawless. Rather than making you stronger and giving you more weapons, the designers rely on you to develop your own techniques—conserving spears and running away from enemies—to deal with the ever-increasing hordes.

The game's art is stylish and edgy, if not just a tad monochromatic at times, and the lighting effects are truly stunning. The sound is also top-notch; the music fits well with the action without being overbearing. The choral tracks that wash over you when your character is low on health are particularly effective, and very cinematic. Some recent movie-based games use a lot of film footage to tie the game to the movie story. In others, such as EA's Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, movie footage is conspicuously absent. King Kong uses the beginning of the movie trailer to set up the landing on Skull Island, but offers no additional film footage, and it is not missed. The story sequences are interactive, allowing you to explore your surroundings as you listen to the dialogue and leaving you fully immersed in the game world. For replay value, you can revisit chapters to play for a score. As you accumulate points, you unlock extras—yet another way that King Kong departs from traditional adventure games and provides a fulfilling experience.

—**George S.**

Get your stinking paws off me, you damned dirty ape!

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHAT TITLE WOULD YOU MOVE UP OR DOWN ON THE NP TOP 200 LIST?

With the final forty gracing our pages this issue, we asked our reviewers for their opinions on the biggest injustices of the NP Top 200 countdown.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

I'm appalled at my coworkers for completely ignoring Soulblazer, Castlevania II, TMNTIV, Axelay and every Sonic game. Maniac Mansion should be ranked higher.

STEVEN GRIMM

I am outraged (outraged, I tell you!) about the Pikmin series not getting the props for being the craziest confection of this hardware generation.

CHRIS SHEPPERD

How is it that not one single Pokémon game cracked the top 40? It can't be one of the best-selling franchises of all time by pure accident.

ANDY MYERS

It makes sense that only one Virtual Boy title made the list, but Warioland at number 184? Come on, people! It's one of the best platformers around!

GEORGE SINFIELD

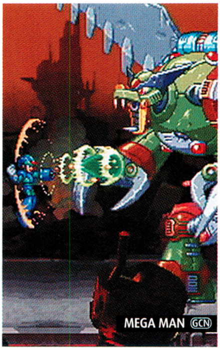
That WarioWare, Inc.: Mega Microgame$ (77) didn't crack the top 40 is a travesty. The GBA's funniest, most creative title deserves recognition among the gaming elite.

STEVE THOMASON

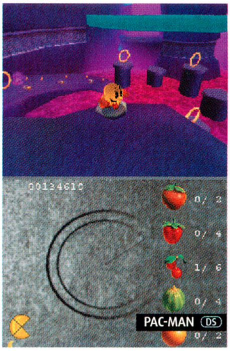
I'm quite vexed ("appalled" and "outraged" were already taken) that Earthworm Jim didn't do better than 114. Flying cows. 'Nuff said.

PETE MICHAUD

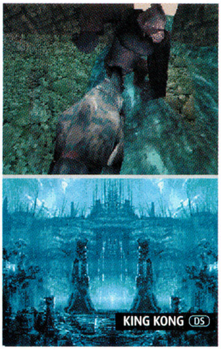
I feel that RE4's position (2) was a bit inflated due to its "newness" factor. Time will tell if it really has what it takes to hang with the best of them.



MEGA MAN (GCN)



PAC-MAN (DS)



KING KONG (DS)

MEGA MAN X COLLECTION

RATING: 8.5

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **Capcom**
DEVELOPER: **Capcom**
ESRB: **Everyone**

What's better than an excellent classic video game? Try seven of them all on one game disc. OK, so not all of the titles in Mega Man X Collection fit the definition of "classic," particularly the later games in the series, but the compilation still contains some of the most precise, fun, challenging games to come out in the last decade or so. The first Mega Man X in particular stands as an example of 2-D gaming at its best; the traditional Mega Man weapon-stealing gameplay is in full effect, only imbued with new life thanks to plenty of hidden power-ups, animal-themed bosses and a more mature tone. This fantastic formula persists in the subsequent three sequels, further enhanced with new features like armored robot walkers, optional bosses, multiple endings and the ability to play as Mega Man's Maverick Hunter pal, Zero. Even though recycled ideas and an overemphasis on a dull narrative (and lame boss names) drag the series from great to good around X5 and the series plummets in X6, the quality gaming you'll encounter on the way more than compensates for the negative aspects. In addition to the flawlessly emulated X games, the collection also features the decent but technologically dated racing game Mega Man Battle & Chase (released for the first time in North America), along with a fair share of extra content. Concept art, remixed musical tracks and more are included, and Mega Man aficionados will be thrilled that the previously overseas-exclusive 32-bit version of X3 is the one featured here, complete with anime cutscenes (and no letterboxing!). The games in MMXC are the kinds that will make your wrists hurt and your palms sweat, and I mean that as the highest compliment. —**Chris H.**

PAC-MAN WORLD 3

RATING: 3.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **Namco**
DEVELOPER: **Human Soft**
ESRB: **Everyone**

Pac-Man World 3 is supposed to celebrate the iconic dot-muncher's 25th birthday, but if it's any indication of what his future holds, he may want to consider early retirement. His latest 3-D platformer suffers from one of the worst cameras in recent memory, killer slowdown and bland levels rife with invisible barriers. For a title that should attract casual gamers (Pac-Man still has huge mainstream appeal), it's also plagued by some shockingly unintuitive play mechanics. It's not a challenging game, per se, but you'll spend a lot of time wandering through the large, unremarkable environments trying to figure out what you're supposed to do next. Those jonesing for a Pac-Man fix would be better served by Pac-Pix or Pac 'n Roll. —**Steve T.**

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

RATING: 3.5

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft**
DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft Casablanca**
ESRB: **Teen**

King Kong's DS version attempts to ape the console game, making it as troublesome as it is ambitious. The GCN version shifted smoothly between first-person action as adventurer Jack and third-person brawls as King Kong. But the DS iteration's FPS scenes suffer from bland level design and repetitive enemies, and the Kong scenarios, while more engaging, are hobbled by poor camera angles and a bad sense of scale; the beast is so big that you often can't see targets at his feet. The game strives to be as immersive as its console kin, but it's visually murky at best—sometimes it's difficult to make out what's happening or to find key items. Fog is so thick in some areas that you'll lose your direction, often exiting the way you came in. And many surfaces show their polygons so badly—seams shining white in the gloom—that they look like they're ready to crumble. The FPS control is fine, done with a combination of stylus-driven pivoting and Control Pad movement, though touching the edges of the screen results in a superquick pivot: well-intended, but at a whiplash speed that often kills your bearings. Kong control, done entirely with buttons, often feels natural for running, wall-crawling and engaging foes in combat. But I encountered serious problems with some levels, including severe slowdown when more than one foe was nearby, falling through one hallway's floor to my death (repeatedly) and hopping fatally to the ground from a very short ledge (once but not again upon a second run-through).
—**Steven G.**

TIME TO KILL

FIT FOR A KING

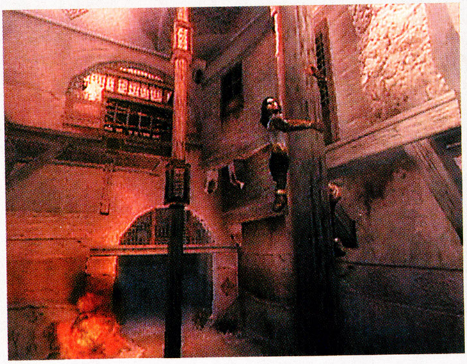
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO GAMECUBE**
PUBLISHER: **UBISOFT**
DEVELOPER: **UBISOFT MONTREAL & CASABLANCA STUDIOS**
ESRB: **MATURE**

Ubisoft's Prince of Persia series has been one of the biggest surprises of the current console generation. It took a crumbling franchise and reinvigorated it with masterful 3-D platform design, perfect controls and first-class production values. The third game in the series, The Two Thrones, may be the best yet. The story picks up right where last year's Warrior Within left off. Having slain the creature that hunted him and saved the Empress of Time (you did get the good ending in Warrior Within, right?), the Prince returns to Babylon, only to find his kingdom under siege. The entire game thus takes place in Persia's sprawling capital as its heir to the throne fights to save his people. Meanwhile, the mystery of who's behind the invasion unfolds in a way that ties the entire trilogy together brilliantly. If you've played the previous games, The Two Thrones packs a surprisingly strong emotional punch, amplified by some stunning cinematics and a stirring classical score.

That's right; no more Godsmack. In fact, everything that made Warrior Within a little less magical than its predecessor—from the rocking music to the out-of-place one-liners—is gone. But where the much-maligned sequel succeeded, The Two Thrones isn't afraid to follow in its footsteps. Though not quite as in-your-face, the overall tone is still pretty dark. And the game seeks to further meld its action and platforming elements through the introduction of the speed kill. If you can get close enough without being spotted, you can now initiate a timed button sequence to take out an enemy instantly. But unlike other games with stealth elements, you don't have to follow behind your foes slowly, waiting for an opportunity to strike. Instead, the platforming segments often flow naturally into a speed kill. You can just run along the wall, jump onto a balcony, decapitate the guy before he even sees you, and be on your way. The traditional battle system from Warrior Within is still at your disposal, but speed kills are so much more satisfying. They make for a more fluid, cohesive experience.



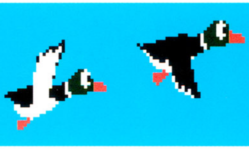
As if that didn't make him deadly enough, our hero occasionally transforms into the Dark Prince, a malicious alter ego armed with a dagger-tailed chain. Your brief stints as the Dark Prince feel much different from the rest of the game, introducing a sense of violent urgency as you're forced to hack and slash through foes mercilessly, ripping the sands from their bodies to replenish your constantly dwindling health meter. The Dark Prince can also use his whiplike weapon to swing from poles and latch onto faraway blocks, giving him the same finesse as his other half despite his demonic appearance. The whole dark persona concept has perhaps gotten a little stale, but it's well-implemented here and sprinkled in just the right amount throughout the journey. In an especially cool touch, The Sands of Time's Yuri Lowenthal returns to voice the "good" Prince, while Robin Atkin Downes from Warrior Within lends his voice to the Dark Prince.

To further spice up the action, The Two Thrones offers a number of boss battles that are far more imaginative and varied than those in either of the previous titles. They use the game's existing mechanics to clever effect, never coming across as awkward or out of place. Your opponent in each of these encounters is a sight to behold, and figuring out how to bring them down requires some thought. A couple of clunky but enjoyable chariot scenes also offer a nice change of pace.

In the end, though, it all comes down to the platforming. Navigating Babylon's trap-filled, multitiered environments with the acrobatic Prince is gaming at its finest. It's challenging but never frustrating, thanks to the ingenious sand powers that allow you to undo your mistakes. The tight controls create a powerful bond between you and your on-screen persona, and the level design is absolutely brilliant. When you get in the zone, swinging from poles, leaping over obstacles and running along walls, the game is like poetry in motion. A triumphant ending to an extraordinary trilogy. —**STEVE T.**

Don't make him angry. You wouldn't like him when he's angry.

NINTENDO POWER
Retro Stickers



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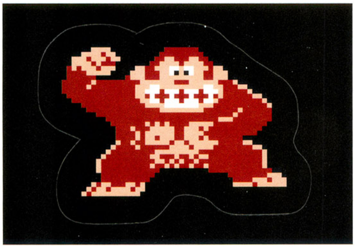

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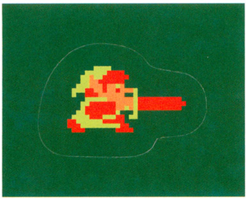

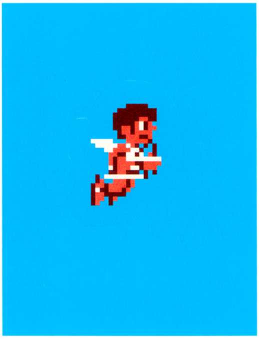

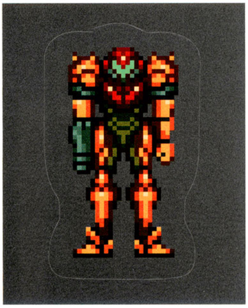

20 YEARS

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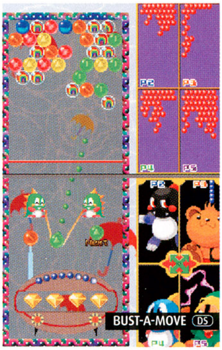
CABELA'S GCN

CHAOS FIELD GCN



CABELA'S DANGEROUS HUNTS 2

RATING: 2.5

PLATFORM: Nintendo GameCube
PUBLISHER: Activision Value
DEVELOPER: Magic Wand Studios
ESRB: Teen

In a stroke of marketing genius, the makers of the Cabela's series have decided to abandon their lock on the sport-hunting genre and take the series in a new direction: a story-driven FPS. The results are disastrous—the play mechanics are poorly conceived and the plot is virtually nonexistent. But Dangerous Hunts goes beyond bad—it's also distasteful, insensitive and wrong. Sport hunting is already a controversial topic, but what Dangerous Hunts 2 offers can in no way be considered hunting. There's nothing sporting about slaughtering every creature you encounter. Further, you, the Westerner, must repeatedly save what the game portrays as uncultured savages from their own inherent failings. This kind of myopic, ethnocentric brutality is the stuff that gives video games as a whole a bad reputation. —Chris S.

CHAOS FIELD EXPANDED

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: Nintendo GameCube
PUBLISHER: O~3
DEVELOPER: Milestone Inc.
ESRB: Everyone

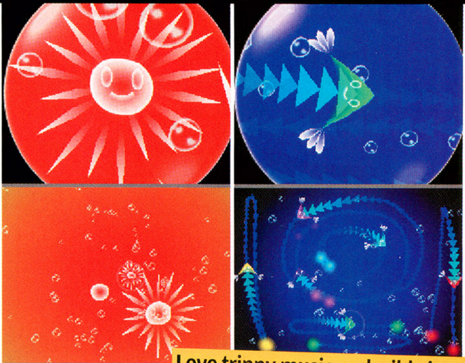
The developers at Treasure need not worry that their space-shooting masterpiece Ikaruga will be eclipsed by the latest techno-laser contender. Though Chaos Field inundates you with waves of energy generated by enormous, intricately detailed ships, causing you to bob and weave through the colors and shapes with reckless abandon, the game doesn't have a big idea like Ikaruga's polarity-switching play mechanic. Every encounter is a set-piece boss battle decorated with glittering patterns of pulsating blobs. It's like fighting a fireworks display. Sometimes the enemy blows up. Sometimes you do. There's no strategy; no hook that makes you think about how you'll do better next time. That said, the production value is amazing, the choice of three types of ships adds variety, and the 15 sections spread out over five levels offer enough action for even the most intense shooter fan. —George S.

BUST-A-MOVE DS

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: Majesco
DEVELOPER: Taito
ESRB: Everyone

Bust-A-Move DS features the same addictive, bubble-bursting gameplay as the many previous entries in the series, but instead of relying on gimmicky playfields and trippy visuals like some installments, this edition's appeal comes from touch-screen controls and a huge number of puzzles. It's too bad you can't change control methods on the fly; the traditional controls feel a bit more precise than the new touch-screen feature, but the touch screen allows for faster response. The dual-screen playfield works perfectly for BAM's vertically oriented gameplay—this is easily the best portable version of Bust-A-Move—and the ability to swap in a reserve bubble adds a whole new layer of strategy. If you like puzzle games and haven't overdosed on Bust-A-Move already, the DS version is a keeper. —Chris H.



TRANCE OF A LIFETIME

Love trippy music and wild visuals? Electroplankton is ecstasy for wannabe artists.

SEA MC

ELECTRO-PLANKTON

RATING: 8.5

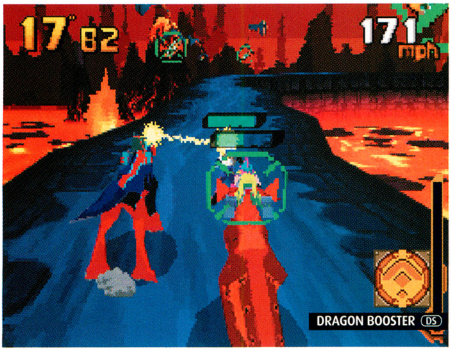
PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
DEVELOPER: Nintendo
ESRB: Everyone

Amazing new species of games are often overshadowed by genre dinosaurs, such as Platformasaurus rex and the F.P. Shooteraptor. Fortunately, Electroplankton follows in the footsteps of Nintendogs and Animal Crossing: Wild World, titles that have already evolved DS gaming as we know it. Like Nintendogs, Electroplankton is a life sim that reacts to your touch, but with none of the commitment. And it's a creative playground like ACWW, but one that focuses on artists' tools.

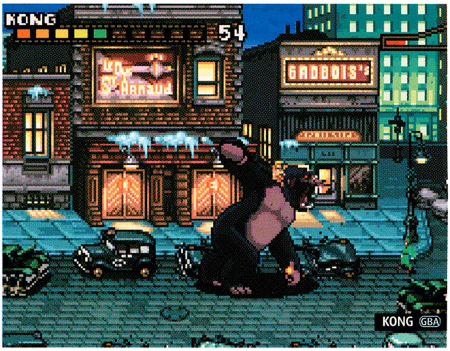
The ten plankton types that have their own unique ways to live through music guarantee that you'll personally find a few tool sets that are perfect for your inner maestro. But all of them are a kick, since they're all so whimsical and visually trippy. (You may never need to go to a laser Pink Floyd show again.)

Personally, I was inspired by the Tracy plankton, wee raylike creatures which come in six colors (corresponding to six instruments such as a harp, chimes and keyboard) and swim along sketched lines, producing a unique tone depending on which direction they swoop. Set all six loose at once (let's say one swimming in a spiral, two running rings around that one, two more rising and falling, and the sixth doing laps at the bottom) to unleash a sonic wave that looks and sounds dazzling. Every time I played with the Tracy, I wound up so enraptured that an hour passed in a flash.

But which will resonate with you? Other plankton span a captivating range of musical styles, visual effects and player interaction (touch- and/or mic-based). Hanenbow minnows bounce around a plant's branches that you twist, making music like mallets hitting a xylophone. The Sun-Animalcule live like sped-up Sea Monkeys, releasing shimmering sounds based on where you seed the fast-growing creatures with the stylus, then inflating to a massive size in minutes before popping. Rec-Rec fish record your sound samples for beat mixes; the donut-shaped Lumiloop emit eerie tones based on how fast you spin them; and the Marine-Snow, which float in pretty crystal structures, produce beautifully chaotic jams when you stir them up. The other four musical species? Just as bizarre and beautiful. The only flaw is that once you've played a little Electroplankton, you'll want more. Ten kinds of musical creatures, especially such little masterpieces, can stimulate you for only so long. —Steven G.



DRAGON BOOSTER DS



KONG GBA

DRAGON BOOSTER

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: HUDSON SOFT
ESRB: EVERYONE

Ever wondered what you'd get if you crossed Mario Kart with the bull-tapping level from Feel the Magic? Nope, I haven't either, but that's essentially how Dragon Booster plays. In general, DB feels like a standard racer—you control your dragon on the track by using the Control Pad—but all other gameplay elements are controlled via the stylus. An icon on the lower screen controls the speed of your racer; drag your stylus upward over it for a boost, downward for it to recharge. This operation is a chore in itself, but you must also tap power-ups and obstacles that appear on the roadway, tap your own dragon to jump gaps in the road, and tap other racers to defeat them—all as fast as you can. The result is a difficult game that can actually make your hand hurt after an hour or two of playing. If so much of the game weren't based solely on the touch screen, Konami might have had a winner. —PETE M.

KONG: THE 8TH WONDER OF THE WORLD

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: GAME BOY ADVANCE
PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MOROCCO
ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

Even though the title doesn't say it explicitly, Kong: The 8th Wonder of the World is the GBA interpretation of Peter Jackson's *King Kong* remake. Unlike its console and DS brethren, 8th Wonder primarily utilizes a 2-D, top-down view and fairly traditional play mechanics, and the resultant adventure is something akin to a shorter, simpler, jungle-based Legend of Zelda—well, except for the occasional side-scrolling scenes where you play as a giant gorilla and punch out dinosaurs. Exploring Skull Island's exterior environs is merely passable, as mazelike design, a rather unhelpful map and enemies that continually spawn behind objects detract from the fun, but things improve substantially once you enter a temple or a cave. Indoors, each team member's unique skills come into play: Jack is good with a machete and rifle, Carl is essential for the many block-pushing puzzles, and Ann . . . is kinda useless, even when she's not being kidnapped by Kong. The group dynamic allows for some welcome challenges in which you must split the party to overcome obstacles cooperatively, plus each member gains access to a small but evolving assortment of tools—spears, torches, etc.—that open up new areas for exploration. Most aspects of 8th Wonder don't fulfill their potential, however. The tools aren't used as much as they could be, there aren't any weapon upgrades and enemy variety is extremely limited. Just when the adventure starts getting interesting, the game is over; it never builds into anything really exciting. King Kong is known for achieving great heights, but this game runs out of steam before reaching the top. —CHRIS H.

PERSIAN THUG

ROYAL RUMBLE

BATTLES OF PRINCE OF PERSIA

RATING: 6.5

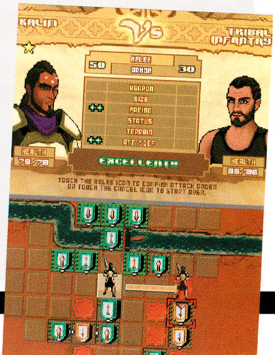
PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MONTREAL
ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

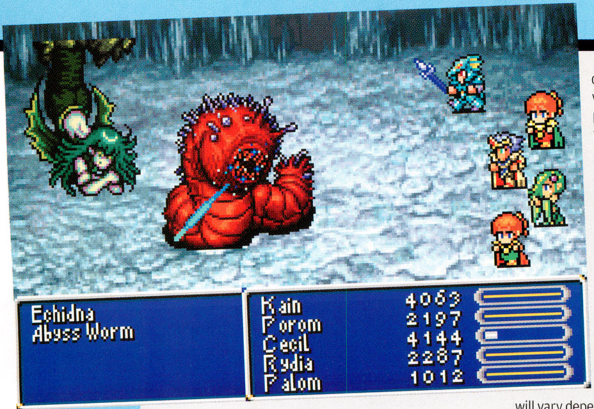
Forget what you know about Prince of Persia. Aside from story, the series' DS debut completely abandons the path blazed by the three GCN games and presents fans with a PoP of a different variety. Battles of Prince of Persia marks the Prince's first turn-based strategy game, pitting him and eight other generals against each other in a massive war that spans the ancient East. And aside from being a little rough around the edges, it offers a satisfying mixture of story, tactical strategy and card collecting.

If you're a fan of other PoP games, you'll appreciate BoPoP's story, which takes place in the years between The Sands of Time and Warrior Within. But like any tactics title, it's the game mechanics, not the story, that make or break the experience. For the most part, the fighting system works well. It accommodates small- and large-scale battles while providing varying levels of difficulty based on terrain, environmental effects and many other factors. I'm not usually a big fan of card-collecting games, but BoPoP doesn't push the collecting aspect to the forefront. You can collect the game's 200-plus cards, manage multiple decks and trade your cards wirelessly—but they don't overshadow the game itself.

Where BoPoP fails is in its presentation and pacing. The visuals (especially during overhead battle management) are bland, even for a tactics game. And as you switch back and forth between choosing cards and commanding only a few units per turn, the game moves too slowly. You have the option to turn battle animations off, but it doesn't help speed things up much, and it gets rid of the only visually stimulating scenery in the game.

The pacing is further slowed by the stylus-only control scheme. I appreciate when developers experiment with stylus control rather than standard control, but BoPoP could have taken a cue from Advance Wars: Dual Strike and offered both. However, BoPoP is just the second tactics game to hit the DS, and it holds its own in a number of ways; it will serve fans of tactics and card-collecting games well. —ANDY M.





THE FINAL IV

RESTORED TO GLORY

FINAL FANTASY IV ADVANCE

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM: **Game Boy Advance**
PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Square Enix**
ESRB: **Everyone 10+**

When I was 14 years old, I saved up 70 precious dollars to purchase a pricey Super NES game called FINAL FANTASY II. I read the game's manual cover to cover before even firing it up, and then mustered the courage to begin playing my first RPG. Before long, I found myself completely immersed in the dark knight Cecil's world, never to look back.

FINAL FANTASY is a sacred subject. For many gamers, it was an FF title that altered their perception of what a video game can be. Nearly every RPG that comes out today owes something—and, in some cases, everything—to the venerable franchise. The series' legacy is probably most apparent with FFII, the first of the 16-bit FF games. Its original North American version (though a dumbed-down interpretation of its Japanese counterpart, called FFIV) won the hearts of geeks everywhere in 1991, and is often deemed the grandfather of the modern RPG. Reworking a game of that caliber without screwing it up is no easy task. In 2001, we saw the release of the full, more-difficult version of the game as part of the FINAL FANTASY Chronicles collection for Sony PlayStation. The game was a faithful port of the original, though it suffered slightly from a seemingly rushed translation and some disc-loading issues. With FFIV Advance for GBA scheduled for release this month, a question arises: do we really need yet another version of this game? If you've already played FFIV in a previous form and didn't much care for it, then your answer is probably no; but for the rest of us, FFIV Advance is the definitive version of the original masterpiece.

For fans of the original version (FFII), FFIV Advance's value will be most apparent in the game's delightful extra features. In addition to a bestiary to keep track of enemies you've encountered, an audio player lets players browse through the game's amazing soundtrack. In the original game, your party lineup changes along with the story, but you're never allowed to customize it. However, near the end of FFIV Advance you can choose five of your 10 surviving party members to take into the game's final area. When you do, one of two brand-new dungeons, the Cave of Trials, will become available as a way to level up your customized party and earn one-of-a-kind weapons. This new option changes the dynamic of the game's ending dramatically—dialogue will vary depending on which party members you beat the game with. It also adds replay value for hardcore players, who will want to beat the last area multiple times to know the entire story. The replay value is further increased by the game's second new dungeon, the massive Lunar Ruins (unlocked after you beat the game), which reveals new story elements for further insight on each character's backstory.

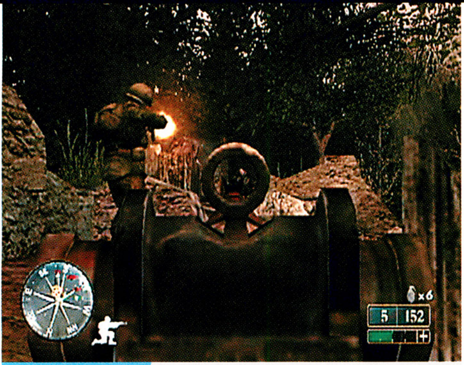
In the 16-bit era, developers couldn't rely on graphics and emotionally charged voice acting to tell a story—the text-based dialogue had to do it. Yet in its original form, FFIV was able to suck players into its world more than any RPG before it. If you've played the game, you know how easy it is to get emotionally attached to your party members—the main character, Cecil, in particular. Cecil is not a great guy. At the beginning of the game, he's on the wrong team, committing terrible acts. You have to follow his quest for a while before he becomes the game's hero. Cecil's dialogue and story elements are reworked with great care in FFIV Advance—it's still as compelling as ever, just smoother and more coherent.

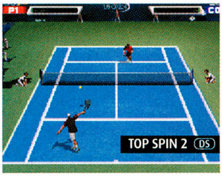
In addition to having a finely tuned story, FFIV Advance looks and plays better than its predecessors. The graphics have been enhanced, a useful timing meter (similar to the one in later Final Fantasy games) is now present during battle sequences and many of the menus have been reworked for easier item organization. Most of FFIV Advance's additions and alterations probably won't knock the average player out of his seat, but they make a significant difference in the game's quality. Square Enix has gone to great lengths to create a new experience for FF fans without fundamentally changing an already great game. It's amazing how well the 14-year old game holds its own against today's RPGs in terms of story quality, difficulty balance, game length and battle mechanics—graphics are the only area where FFIV Advance is not quite up to par. And like most FF games, the difficulty spikes dramatically at the final boss battle, forcing you to wander around aimlessly for a while to gain experience. It definitely makes for a rewarding finale, but you may have some grey hairs on your head when all's said and done.

Despite its few flaws, FFIV Advance is most definitely worth your time. For those who look back fondly on the original, FFIV Advance is a well-crafted restoration with a few extra surprises. And for those who have never played the original, FFIV may be the best RPG offering on the GBA to date (though FINAL FANTASY V & VI may steal the crown in the coming months). —**Andy M.**

One of the best RPGs of all time gets even better.

But first...
My undead hunger...for your flesh!





PAINTBALL (GBA)
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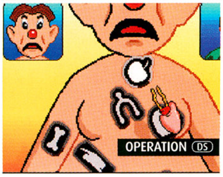
KING OF ATLANTIS (GBA)



INTO THE BREACH

FIRE AND FORGET

CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **Activision**
DEVELOPER: **Treyarch**
ESRB: **Teen**

To separate it from the pack of World War II action games flooding the video game market, the plan for Call of Duty 2: Big Red One was to create a more cinematic appeal, and for the most part that's what happened. Unfortunately, the best intentions can lead a good game astray. Big Red One's personalized storytelling and scene delivery by reputable actors succeed in creating a movielike experience, but the linear, heavily scripted gameplay suffers as a result.

Big Red One is divided into vignettes that follow a company of army soldiers as they trudge through World War II's most difficult and memorable battles. But the epic feel of these historical events gets diminished by the amount of time the game spends focusing on the relationships between the soldiers themselves. Consequentially, where the soldiers are means little compared to what they're doing. Much of the time you feel like you're trying not only to complete the stated mission objectives, but also to run through an invisible checklist of goals—defeat this many enemies, walk this many steps, arrive at this particular room—just to make sure you're at the right place when the next cut-scene should start. This philosophy toward level creation is never more apparent than at the abrupt end of the game—the story could end virtually anywhere and you wouldn't be surprised, because the events outside of your small group of soldiers have virtually no bearing on the game.

It's not fair to say the developers didn't devote any attention to creating an epic feel, however; the graphical presentation gives a sense of grandeur throughout the many locales. The planes that pass overhead constantly and the silhouettes of infantrymen that dot hillsides as you make your way toward your next destination do make you feel as if you're part of a greater force than just your own small group. And the development team's commitment to good motion capture and voice acting pays off with well-made, realistic cut-scenes. But although the landscape and acting are of the highest quality, they simply can't make up for the issues plaguing Big Red One. —**Chris S.**

TOP SPIN 2

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **2K Games**
DEVELOPER: **Power and Magic/ Indie Built**
ESRB: **Everyone**

The original Top Spin for Xbox remains one of the best tennis sims available, so this mediocre DS sequel comes as a disappointment. Though it boasts the same deep-yet-simple controls as its console predecessor (each button performs a different type of shot), it fails to offer a comparable experience because the action feels downright sluggish at times. What's more, the game does nothing to take advantage of the hardware, and the career mode, while impressively lengthy, is ultimately too shallow to hold your interest; the only thing you can spend your hard-earned winnings on is a collection of uninspired training minigames. Maybe Sega can bring its Virtua Tennis franchise to the DS with better results. —**Steve T.**

ALSO THIS MONTH

Spun off from *Kong: The Animated Series* Majesco's, **Kong: King of Atlantis (GBA)** follows the unlikely adventures of the giant monkey's clone and his human brother. . . . If you prefer cuddly bears over lizard-crushing monkeys, The American Game Factory's **Care Bears: Care Quest (GBA)** may be more your speed. . . . **Texas Hold 'Em Poker Pack** from Summitsoft cashes in on the poker craze with a stripped-down card-game simulation. . . . **Elf Bowling 1 & 2 (DS/GBA)** from Ignition cashes in on the knocking-fantasy-characters-over-with-a-bowling-ball craze. . . . Majesco's **Rec Room Challenge (GBA)** is darts, shuffle bowl (a combination of shuffleboard and bowling) and Roll-a-Ball (Skee-Ball) all in one pak. . . . **Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd (GBA)** from Activision is less deadly than other first-person shooters, but just as messy. . . . First there was Atlus's Trauma Center for the DS. Now Destination is getting into medical practice on the GBA with the **Operation/Mouse Trap/Simon** pak. Additional games in the company's latest board-game sweep are **Candy Land/Chutes and Ladders/Memory (GBA)** and **The Game of Life/ Yahtzee/Payday (GBA)**. . . . Atari is throwing its top hat into the board-game ring with **Monopoly/Yahtzee/Boggle/Battleship (DS)**. . . . **Pocket Dogs (GBA)** from 0~3 gives you Q.T. with eight puppy breeds and activities that include shopping and simple minigames. . . . Garfield's buddy goes missing in The American Game Factory's 2-D platformer **Garfield: The Search for Pooky (GBA)**. . . . More animals get there due in **Franklin's Great Adventures (DS), Franklin the Turtle (GBA)** and **Koala Brothers: Outback Adventures (GBA)** from The American Game Factory. . . . If Tetris takes too much of your brain's bandwidth, you can give puzzler **Tringo (GBA)** from Crave a try. . . . The DS release of **Top Spin 2**, reviewed this issue, has a GBA counterpart, also from Take Two.

London
8:21 PM

Maui
9:21 AM

Manhattan
3:21 PM

Lunch Break
Seattle
12:21 PM

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[ARCHIVE]

REVIEWING REVIEWS

Since our Volume 193 redesign, individual reviewers have rated games on a 10-point scale. In issues before 193, five reviewers rated each game on a five-point scale. The scores for those games were averaged and translated to the new system for the archive. That resulted in scores such as 6.5 for Pokémon Emerald, though some reviewers scores would have been as high as 8.0 under the new system. To avoid confusion, the archive will now feature only games reviewed in Volume 193 and beyond.

Scores reflect individual reviewers' opinions.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Title	Score	Publisher	Vol.	ESRB
Batman Begins	6.5	Electronic Arts	194	T
Battalion Wars	8.5	Nintendo	197	T
Bratz: Rock Angelz	N/A	THQ	198	E
Cabela's Outdoor Adventures	6.5	Activision	198	T
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	2.5	Global Star	195	E
Chicken Little	6.0	Buena Vista	198	E10+
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	5.5	Buena Vista	199	T
Crash Tag Team Racing	7.0	VU Games	198	E10+
Dance Dance Revolution: Mario Mix	7.5	Nintendo	198	E
Digimon World 4	7.0	Bandai	193	E
Dora the Explorer: Journey to the Purple Planet	N/A	Global Star	198	EC
Fantastic Four	6.0	Activision	194	T
FIFA Soccer 06	9.0	Electronic Arts	197	E
Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance	9.5	Nintendo	197	T
Frogger: Ancient Shadow	5.5	Konami	197	E
From Russia with Love	7.0	Electronic Arts	199	T
Geist	5.0	Nintendo	196	M
Gun	8.25	Activision	199	M
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Harvest Moon: Another Wonderful Life	7.5	Natsume	195	E
Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue	5.0	Namco	196	E
The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction	8.5	VU Games	196	T
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	7.5	THQ	198	E10+
International Golf and Tennis	3.0	Ignition	193	E
Karaoke Revolution Party	8.0	Konami	199	E10+
Kids Next Door: Operation V.I.D.E.O.G.A.M.E.	N/A	Global Star	198	E10+
Killer 7	8.5	Capcom	193	M
Knights of the Temple	5.0	Aspyr	194	M
Lego *Star Wars*	6.5	Eidos	198	E
Madagascar	6.0	Activision	194	E10+
Madden NFL 06	9.0	Electronic Arts	195	E
Mario Party 7	7.5	Nintendo	199	E
Mario Superstar Baseball	9.0	Nintendo	196	E
Mark Davis: Pro Bass Challenge	5.0	Natsume	198	E
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	7.0	Electronic Arts	197	T
Medal of Honor: European Assault	8.0	Electronic Arts	194	T
Midway Arcade Treasures 3	6.5	Midway	197	E
Namco 50th Anniversary Arcade Collection	7.0	Namco	197	E10+
NBA Live 06	5.5	Electronic Arts	198	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	T
NHL 06	8.5	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
One Piece: Grand Battle	6.5	Bandai	197	T
Pac-Man World 3	7.0	Namco	199	E
Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness	8.5	Nintendo	197	E
Scooby-Doo!: Unmasked	7.5	THQ	197	E
Shadow the Hedgehog	8.0	Sega	199	E10+
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
The Sims 2	8.5	Electronic Arts	199	T
Sonic Gems Collection	8.5	Sega	195	E
Spartan: Total Warrior	8.5	Sega	197	M
SSX On Tour	8.0	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Super Mario Strikers	7.5	Nintendo	199	E
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	8.5	THQ	197	E
Teenage Mutant Ninja turtles 3: Mutant Nightmare	4.0	Konami	199	E10+
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06	9.0	Electronic Arts	197	E
Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	9.0	Activision	198	T
True Crime: New York City	8.0	Activision	199	M
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger: Night of the Quinkan	6.0	Activision	198	E10+
Ultimate Spider-Man	9.0	Activision	198	T
Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble	6.5	Capcom	199	T
World Series of Poker	4.5	Activision	198	E10+
WWE: Day of Reckoning 2	8.0	THQ	197	T
X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse	7.5	Activision	198	T
Zatch Bell!: Mamodo Battles	6.0	Bandai	198	T

NINTENDO DS

Title	Score	Publisher	Vol.	ESRB
Advance Wars: Dual Strike	9.5	Nintendo	196	E
Animal Crossing: Wild World	9.0	Nintendo	199	E
Bomberman	7.0	Ubisoft	194	E
Burnout Legends	N/A	Electronic Arts	199	E
Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow	9.0	Konami	197	T
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	7.0	Buena Vista	199	E10+
Dig Dug Digging Strike	7.0	Namco	198	E
Dragon Ball z: Supersonic Warriors 2	5.0	Atari	199	E10+
FIFA Soccer 06	8.0	Electronic Arts	198	E
Frogger: Helmet Chaos	5.0	Konami	196	E
Ford Racing 3	N/A	Destination	198	E
Frogger: Helmet Chaos	5.0	Konami	196	E
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	6.0	Electronic Arts	195	T
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	5.5	THQ	199	E10+
Kim Possible: Kimmunicator	6.0	Buena Vista	198	E
Kirby: Canvas Curse	9.0	Nintendo	194	E
Lost in Blue	8.0	Konami	197	E10+
Lunar: Dragon Song	7.0	Ubisoft	197	E10+
Madagascar	7.0	Activision	194	E
Madden NFL 06	8.0	Electronic Arts	196	E
Mario Kart DS	9.0	Nintendo	199	E
Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time	9.0	Nintendo	199	E
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	5.0	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Mega Man Battle Network 5: Double Team DS	7.0	Capcom	198	E
Meteos	9.0	Nintendo	194	E
Metroid Prime Pinball	9.5	Nintendo	198	E
Nanostray	8.0	Majesco	195	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	6.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
Nintendogs	8.5	Nintendo	196	E
Pac 'N Roll	7.5	Namco	196	E
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney	8.0	Capcom	197	T
Puyo Pop Fever	6.0	Atlus	193	E
Real Time Conflict: Shogun Empires	7.0	Namco	198	E10+
SBK: Snowboard Kids	7.5	Atlus	199	E

REVIEWER NOTES

I'm.. I'm a PRINCE! I can't lose to you! Bluuuuuuurgh...

MARIO & LUIGI: PARTNERS IN TIME

Like its GBA predecessor, Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time delivers a sensational RPG experience. I played this game more than any sane person should, and I'm still ready to give it another go. The humor—through both the writing and the animations—is top-notch, and combat is always exciting. I really wish the developers had done more with the time-travel concept, but I guess you can't have everything. —Chris H.

>ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN (GCN)

A comic book come to life, Ultimate Spider-Man exhibits artistry and excellent gameplay, leaping well past its predecessors with both exciting open-ended action and well-executed scripted battles. —George S.

50-50
WHEELIE

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN SK8LAND (DS)

The Tony Hawk titles have always been games of one-upmanship, which makes Sk8land the perfect Wi-Fi scoreboard cruncher. There are rookie and pro scoreboard entries for each of the game's seven areas, and you can earn a ranking for scoring big points or for your proficiency in grinds, manuals or lip tricks—giving you many different ways to make a mark. —George S.

>ANIMAL CROSSING: WILD WORLD

How isn't WW superb? It unites AC's devoted fanbase with Wi-Fi and LAN, makes typing and chatting easier via touch and brings its animal neighbors to life more vividly than the GCN version. A must-own DS game. —Steven G.

Title	Score	Publisher	Vol.	ESRB
Sega Casino	6.0	Sega	199	T
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
The Sims 2	5.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Snood 2: On Vacation	N/A	Destination	199	E
Sonic Rush	9.0	Sega	199	E
Space Invaders Revolution	4.0	Mastiff	196	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: The Yellow Avenger	3.5	THQ	198	E
Spyro: Shadow Legacy	6.5	VU Games	198	E
Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith	8.0	Ubisoft	193	E10+
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	7.5	THQ	197	E
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3: Mutant Nightmare	6.0	Konami	198	E
Texas Hold 'Em Poker DS	5.0	Majesco	198	E
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Lockdown	6.0	Ubisoft	197	M
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	8.0	Ubisoft	194	T
Tony Hawk's American Sk8land	8.0	Activision	199	E
Trace Memory	8.5	Nintendo	197	T
Trauma Center: Under the Knife	9.0	Atlus	198	T
Ultimate Spider-Man	6.5	Activision	198	E10+
Whac-A-Mole	N/A	Activision Value	197	E
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Nightmare Troubadour	8.0	Konami	196	E
Viewtiful Joe: Double Trouble	7.0	Capcom	198	T
Zoo Tycoon DS	7.5	THQ	197	E
GAME BOY ADVANCE				
Atomic Betty	N/A	Namco	198	E
ATV Quad Frenzy	N/A	Majesco	199	E
Backyard Football 2006	N/A	Atari	197	E
Backyard Skateboarding	N/A	Atari	198	E
Barbie and the Magic of Pegasus	N/A	VU Games	197	E
Batman Begins	5.5	Electronic Arts	194	T
The Berenstain Bears and the Spooky Old Tree	N/A	Namco	197	E
The Bible Game	N/A	Crave	197	E
Big Mutha Truckers	N/A	Destination	199	E10+
Bionicle: Maze of Shadows	N/A	THQ	198	E
Board Game Classics	N/A	Destination	197	E
Bratz: Rock Angelz	N/A	THQ	198	E
Centipede Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	3.5	Global Star	195	E
Chicken Little	N/A	Buena Vista	198	E
Chicken Shoot	N/A	Destination	198	E10+
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	N/A	Buena Vista	199	E
Connect Four Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Danny Phantom: The Ultimate Enemy	N/A	THQ	197	E
Disney's Magical Quest 3 Starring Mickey & Donald	5.5	Capcom	194	E
DK: King of Swing	8.0	Nintendo	197	E
Dogz	N/A	Ubisoft	199	E
Donkey Kong Country 3	8.0	Nintendo	198	E
Dr. Mario & Puzzle League	7.0	Nintendo	199	E
Dragon Ball GT: Transformation	5.5	Atari	196	E10+
Driv3r	5.5	Atari	198	T
Duel Masters: Shadow of the Code	5.5	Atari	198	E
Dynasty Warriors Advance	7.0	Nintendo	196	E10+
everGirl	N/A	THQ	198	E
The Fairly OddParents!: Clash with the Anti-World	N/A	THQ	199	E
Fantastic Four	6.5	Activision	194	E10+
FIFA Soccer 06	7.0	Electronic Arts	198	E
Fire Emblem: The Sacred Stones	9.0	Nintendo	193	E
Ford Racing 3	N/A	Destination	198	E
Gauntlet Compilation	6.5	Destination	197	E
Gumby vs. the Astrobots	5.0	Namco	196	E
Gunstar Super Heroes	9.5	Sega	198	E10+
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
Harvest Moon: More Friends of Mineral Town	8.5	Natsume	195	E
Hello Kitty: Happy Party Pals	N/A	THQ	199	E
Herbie: Fully Loaded	5.5	Disney Interactive	194	E
Hi Hi Puffy Amiyumi: Kaznapped!	6.5	D3	199	E
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	N/A	THQ	199	E
James Pond Codename Robocod	4.0	Valcon Games	195	E
Juka and the Monophonic Menace	5.0	Orbital Media	196	E
Kim Possible III: Team Possible	6.5	Disney Interactive	195	E
KLAX Compilation	4.0	Destination	197	E
Lizzie McGuire 3	N/A	Buena Vista	197	E
Madagascar	7.0	Activision	194	E
Madagascar: Operation Penguin	N/A	Activision	199	E
Madden NFL 06	7.0	Electronic Arts	196	E
Mario Tennis: Power Tour	7.0	Nintendo	199	E
Mega Man Battle Network 5: Team Colonel & Team Protoman	6.5	Capcom	194	E
Mega Man Zero 4	8.5	Capcom	198	E
Millipede Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Mr. Driller 2	5.0	Namco	193	E
Namco Museum 50th Anniversary Arcade Collection	5.5	Namco	197	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	N/A	Electronic Arts	199	E
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
The Nightmare Before Christmas: The Pumpkin King	6.5	Buena Vista	198	E10+
One Piece	8.0	Bandai	197	E10+
Pac-Man Pinball Advance	7.0	Namco	193	E
Pac-Man World 2	6.0	Destination	197	E
Paperboy Compilation	5.5	Destination	197	E
Pong Compilation	5.5	Destination	197	E
Popeye: Rush for Spinach	5.0	Namco	193	E
Power Rangers: S.P.D.	4.0	THQ	196	E10+
The Proud Family	N/A	Buena Vista	199	E
Rebelstar: Tactical Command	7.0	Namco	197	E10+
Risk Compilation	7.0	Destination	197	E
Riviera: The Promised Land	6.5	Atlus	194	T
Scrabble Blast	7.5	Destination	193	E
Scrabble Jr. Compilation	4.5	Destination	197	E
Shaman King: Master of Spirits 2	6.5	Konami	196	E 10+
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
Sigma Star Saga	8.5	Namco	195	E10+
The Sims 2	7.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Sky Dancers	N/A	Crave	199	E
Snood 2: On Vacation	N/A	Destination	199	E
Spy Hunter Compilation	4.5	Destination	197	E
Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith	7.0	Ubisoft	193	E10+
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	4.0	THQ	197	E
Teen Titans	6.0	Majesco	198	E10+
Tony Hawk's American Sk8land	6.0	Activision	199	E
Tokyo Xtreme Racer Advance	3.5	Crave	193	E
Trollz: Hair Affair	N/A	Ubisoft	199	E
Ultimate Arcade Games	N/A	Telegames	198	E
Ultimate Spider-Man	6.0	Activision	198	E10+
WarioWare: Twisted!	8.5	Nintendo	193	E
W.I.T.C.H.	N/A	Buena Vista	197	E
Yoshi Topsy-Turvy	7.0	Nintendo	194	E
Zatch Bell!: Electric Arena	N/A	Bandai	198	E10+
Zooo	4.5	Ignition	196	E

>FIFA SOCCER 06

Simplified, intuitive controls and improved AI have made FIFA Soccer 06 one of the most entertaining sports games around. The addition of classic players has added to the epic feel of the sport, as well.

—Chris S.

MARIO KART DS

It's easy to sing the praises of Mario Kart DS—the game's fine-tuned controls and incredible number of karts, characters and tracks make it the best kart-racing game to date. But the game's greatest achievements are in its wireless features (through LAN and Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection)—these fundamentally alter the multiplayer experience, which has always been the bread and butter of the Mario Kart series. If there were ever a perfect handheld game, this is it. —Andy M.

>THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP

When The Minish Cap came out about a year ago, it proved that great things truly do come in small packages. Shrinking Link to microscopic size adds a fantastic twist to the Zelda formula.

—Chris H.

SAMBA DE AMIGO

SONIC PINBALL PARTY

Originally available only at Target, Sonic Pinball Party is getting a wider release as part of a combo pack with Sonic Advance (itself a great game). This oft-overlooked gem remains one of the best pinball video games ever released, and should appeal especially to die-hard Sega fans; there are tables based on Sonic the Hedgehog, NiGHTS into Dreams and Samba de Amigo. If you have any desire to play pinball on your GBA, do yourself a favor and pick this one up.

—Steve T.

NP enthusiast Nicholas DeNardis (whose NP collection is featured here) has been subscribing since the Fun Club News days.

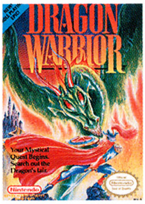
NINTENDO POWER

The 200 Club

As a way of giving thanks to our hardest-core subscribers, we contacted a handful of the many devotees who have been with Nintendo Power since the very first issue (that's 17 years!) and asked them to reminisce about their favorite experiences with the magazine. Here are some of the responses we received.

By Andy Myers

LOUIS V.
NEW YORK
Nintendo Power has been responsible for some of the fondest gaming magazine memories I have ever had. I remember the old Howard and Nester comics (not to mention the multi-issue Star Fox and Metroid comics—arguably two of my favorites). The huge Genesis vs. Super Nintendo debate. The awesome posters included with each and every issue. And, of course, the news, reviews and all the fun little extras that came with the membership! (Free Dragon Warrior game and 5/50 pin, anyone?)


DRAGON WARRIOR
Your Mystical Quest Begins. Search out the Dragon's lair.
Nintendo

RAY G.
FLORIDA
Classified Information was awesome back in the olden days. U nailed a lot of cool Easter eggs for some great games. Especially the infamous Konami code.

BUILD UP YOUR FORCES FAST!

START YOUR GAME WITH OVER 30 EXTRA MEN WITH THIS "EXTRA LIFE" COMMAND.

GET AN INSTANT RECHARGE WITH 30 NEW MEN READY TO DO BATTLE.

CONTINUE

NICHOLAS D.
WISCONSIN
I have enjoyed countless hours playing [Nintendo games] and know someday when I have children and grandchildren they will enjoy both the collection I have created, as well as the games that will be out then.

PAUL B.
TENNESSEE
I remember the drive home was the worst. You have the game in your hands. You can read the instructions 50 times. But you still have to wait those endless 15 minutes to play the game that you have been reading about in Nintendo Power for the past two months. (Back in my day, Nintendo Power came out once every two months.)

Here's longtime subscriber Paul B. and his girlfriend, Claire, cosplaying Leon and Ashley from Resident Evil 4.

ANTHONY P.
NEW YORK
I remember when I was getting the Nintendo newsletter and I remember seeing the ad for a new [bimonthly] magazine from Nintendo called Nintendo Power. Well, I just had to have it . . . so I had my mom (I was kid back then) order me a subscription, and I remember when I got issue #1 in the mail.

Introducing Nintendo Power.
The most exciting players' magazine in video history.
Over 100 power-packed pages! Subscribe now.
NINTENDO POWER

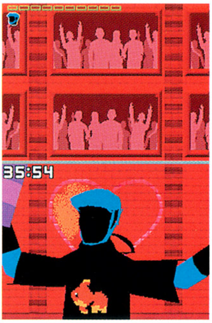
JONATHAN B.
CONNECTICUT
Over the past 20 years Nintendo and Nintendo Power have been a very big part of my life. I own more than 600 Nintendo games from all of the Nintendo systems. I used to eat Nintendo Cereal, watch *Captain N the Game Master* and even the Zelda/Mario cartoons! When I call up Nintendo and give them my subscriber number they always ask if it has any more 0's at the end of it. They are not used to such a low number!

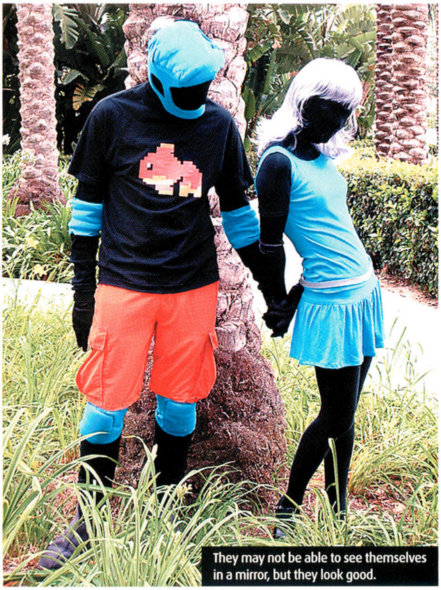
The NP crew gives a heartfelt thanks to all the subscribers who have been with us since the beginning. We wish we could have included each and every one of you in this article.

COSPLAY

FEEL THE COSPLAY

When you start up Feel the Magic: XY/XX on your Nintendo DS, the message "Do not attempt to re-create any of the situations seen in this game" appears onscreen. Cosplayers Lydia Chen and Zack Fornaca of California didn't listen. Their costumes (created by Lydia) are some of the most creative we've seen, getting us even more excited for the upcoming sequel to Sega's bizarre creation, titled The Rub Rabbits! —Andy M.





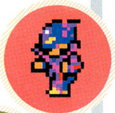
They may not be able to see themselves in a mirror, but they look good.

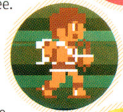
WI-FI

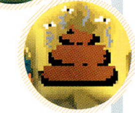
A GROWING COMMUNITY

Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection is up and running, and the world has taken notice—nearly half of those who purchased Mario Kart DS connected to the service in the first week! As the Nintendo WFC grows, the Community section of NP will grow right along with it, covering the many facets of this exciting new service.

Mario Kart Artistry







We're quite proud of our Mario Kart DS icons here in the NP office. The in-game paint editor makes it easy to create a masterpiece, then paste it onto your kart for the world to see. But our artistry pales in comparison to some of the icons we've already seen popping up on the worldwide service. If you've got an icon that you're particularly proud of, send a photo of it to wifi_community@nintendopower.com. We may run it in a future issue. (The easiest way to photograph your DS screen is to turn out the lights, turn off your camera's flash and fire away.) We look forward to seeing your kart art!

The NP Crew Calls You Out!

Angry about a recent review score? Unleash your frustration on the racetrack! The NP Crew will be hosting a series of Mario Kart DS matches in January. Here's how it works: e-mail your name, friend code and screen name to wifi_community@nintendopower.com. We'll randomly select 25 players and reply to their e-mails with more information (including time and date). The NP Crew will kick butt and take names for two hours straight, so come with your game face on. We must warn you, though: we're pretty good (or so we think).

Lords of Sk8land

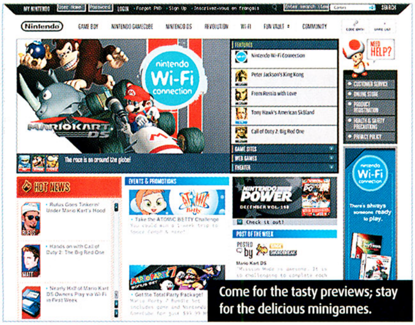
As of Nov. 29, less than two weeks after the game's launch, scores have been soaring into the high millions on all seven levels of Tony Hawk's American Sk8land. To view current high scores, skater profiles and general stats, visit www.nintendowifi.com and www.american-sk8land.com.

LEADERBOARD

ALCATRAZ: 22,047,325 (Pichux)
BEVERLY HILLS: 27,345,982 (doomgon)
DOWNTOWN: 24,924,931 (LMS10)
EAST LA: 15,397,101 (sk8r489)
HOLLYWOOD: 77,760,657 (Banks)
VANS: 18,060,680 (sk8r489)
WAREHOUSE: 100,000,000 (doomgon)

E-mail us! wifi_community@nintendopower.com

ONLINE

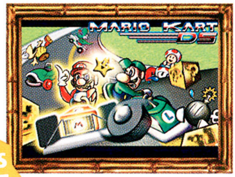


Come for the tasty previews; stay for the delicious minigames.

Web Savvy

The dust has finally settled at Nintendo.com, and we think the remodeling came out quite nicely. Dubbed "Nintendo.com 2.5" by the Big N's web wizards, the site hosts a ton of new features worth checking out. New navigation tools and a sleek, revamped look make getting around much easier than before. Stop by and say hi!

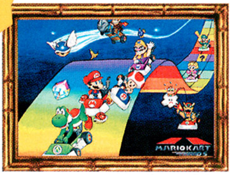
NOVEMBER'S ART OF THE MONTH



ARTIST:
GODDESSZELDA

SUBJECT:
Mario Kart DS

Computer-Drawn Category



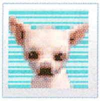
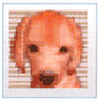
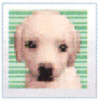
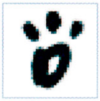
ARTIST:
SMASH_MASTER_TIMMY

SUBJECT:
Mario Kart DS

Hand-Drawn Category

Online artists had their Mario Kart creativity in high gear and sent in some top-notch compositions. To submit your own trophy-worthy works, race over to **forums.nintendo.com**.

Custom-Made Avatars **By Pete Michaud**

Sage Reviews

It's great to see some of our new sages writing solid reviews. Keep up the great work!

Sage Review of the Month

Metroid Prime Pinball

reviewed by
LBOOGIE

For the first time ever, Samus Aran enters into the pinball realm. But Metroid Prime Pinball is far more than your ordinary pinball game. The tables come from many of the areas seen in Metroid Prime, such as Tallon Overworld, Phendrana Drifts and the Pirate Frigate. Each table is full of vivid detail while pushing the Nintendo DS's graphic capabilities to the max.

As Samus bounces around the pinball table, many missions can take place. Some missions will consist of bumping into every enemy on the table, while others will require Samus to roll through an obstacle within a certain time period. For example, Metroid Mania requires players to whack into the Metroids to destroy them.

Samus can also collect power-ups such as power bombs and missiles to defeat enemies. In combat mode, Samus stands in the middle of the pinball table; you control her aim left or right by using the L and R Buttons while she automatically fires. There are even boss battles in the game, and combat mode definitely comes in handy for that.

Even though fans of the series would still prefer a real Metroid adventure, Metroid Prime Pinball is still a fun game. It offers addicting gameplay and it's amazing how well Metroid elements can blend with a pinball game.

Excerpts from Other Sage Reviews

LEGO Star Wars
"It would've been nice to have some kind of voice acting in the game—it didn't even need to be the original actors. Those who have never seen the movies . . . will have no clue what's going on."—WOLVERINE

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (GCN)
"You never touch a broom, there is no Quidditch match, and in fact flying really doesn't seem to be terribly important in this game. For that matter, neither is Quidditch."—HYLIANELF

What's a Sage?
Sages are members of the NSider online community that are put through the wringer and hand-picked by Nintendo. They get tons of special privileges, including opportunities to review games for Nintendo Power magazine.

It's Your World
From cosplay to game collections, the response to the Community section has been unbelievable. As a reminder, even if we requested something several months ago, don't hesitate to send it to us—it's never too late. We read every e-mail you send. If you have something you think belongs here, we'll be sure to see it.

community@nintendopower.com
pokemon_community@nintendopower.com

Pokémon fans got to see Pikachu face to face to face to face . . .

Rock and Rollout!

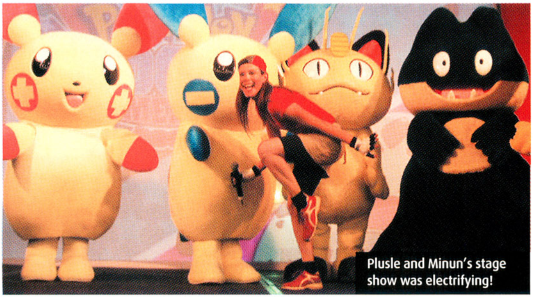
Pokémon fans lined up to check out Pokémon Rocks America, an exclusive event to honor all things Pokémon.

Throughout September and October, Pokémon Rocks America 2005 toured across the United States. The shows brought out more than 40,000 Pokémon fans in five cities: San José, Phoenix, Dallas, Chicago and Boston. It was the first time that these cities hosted Pokémon Rocks America, but some of the showgoers had attended the festivities before—fans at every location showed off T-shirts and other merch from previous Pokémon Rocks America events. With about 11,000 people attending, Boston's show was the largest Pokémon Rocks America show yet.

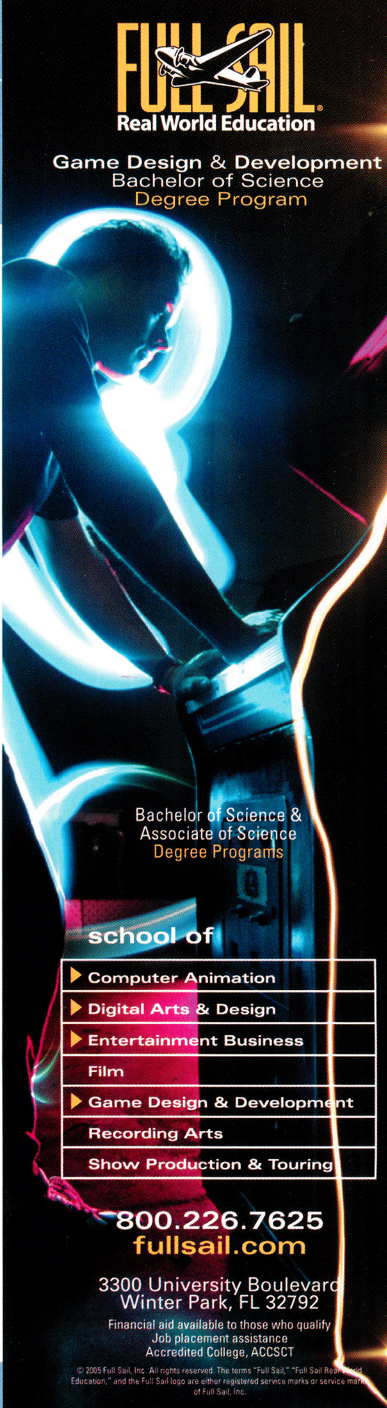
Before every event, crowds of more than 500 eager fans waited in line outside the venues. Once inside, players of all ages were treated to a variety of Pokémon activities, including hands-on previews of Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness, as well as training and challenge sessions of the Pokémon Trading Card Game. Attendees also caught stage shows and participated in Pokémon-related carnival games like Blaziken's Goal Kick and Diglett Roll, as well as checked out the famed Pikachu Volkswagen Beetle up close.

Pokémon gamers were invited to bring their game paks to the show to compete in competitions or just engage in freestyle multiplayer action. Fans could also download the rare Mystic Ticket—over 12,000 Trainers seized the opportunity to nab the special item, which allows players to catch Ho-Oh and Lugia in Pokémon FireRed & LeafGreen and Emerald. A special version of the Pokémon Metang that (unlike the Metang players can catch in the games) comes with the Refresh move was also available for download.

For information on upcoming events in your area, check pokemon.com. —**Chris S.**



Plusle and Minun's stage show was electrifying!



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POWER QUIZ

NP IQ

Games have changed a lot over the years, as has Nintendo Power magazine. We've highlighted some memorable (and some slightly embarrassing) NP moments from the past 199 issues. Visit **nintendopower.com/quiz** for the answers today, or wait for your next issue.

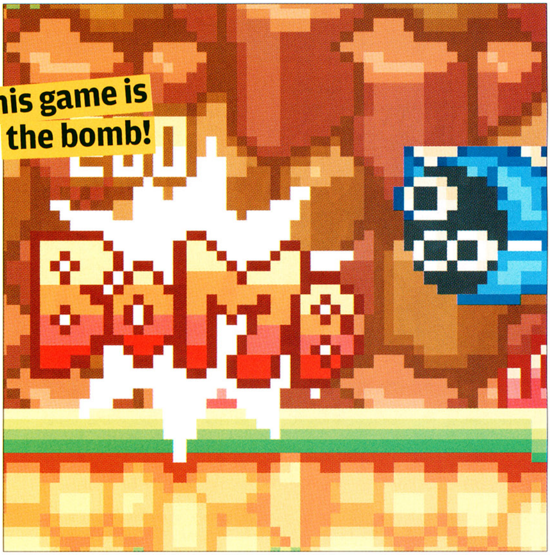
1 In Nintendo Power's monumental redesign launch issue (Volume 193), we revealed that The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess would have Link transforming into a . . . ?
a. Bear
b. Chihuahua
c. Wolf
d. Red-and-blue big rig

2 The Nintendo Power logo changed to a 3-D rendered look in Volume 68, and stayed that way for 75 issues. What hardware appeared on the cover of the first issue to don the simplified 2-D logo?
a. Game Boy Color
b. Game Boy Advance
c. Virtual Boy
d. Nintendo GameCube

3 In Volume 193, what game's lineage was traced back to Grand Theft Auto, hippies and Satan in the first installment of NP's ongoing Family Tree feature?
a. Gun
b. The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction
c. True Crime: New York City

4 What was the first M-rated game to be the subject of a Nintendo Power cover?
a. Doom
b. Turok: Dinosaur Hunter
c. Mortal Kombat II

5 What character starred opposite Howard Phillips in a popular Nintendo Power comic strip?
a. Nester
b. Luigi
c. Jumpman
d. Captain N

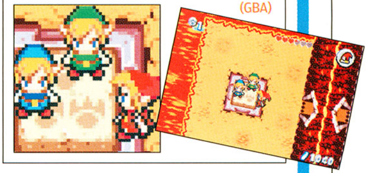

This game is the bomb!

PIXEL-PERFECT

NAME THAT SCREENSHOT

The game featured in the overblown screenshot above not only contributed to the successful launch of Nintendo Power magazine; it also redefined platform gaming on one of the greatest video game consoles of all time.

LAST MONTH'S FEATURE:
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS
(GBA)



6 Many readers never forgave us for ditching the classic manila-envelope look of Classified Information. What was the final issue to print Classified Information in this format?
a. Volume 50
b. Volume 78
c. Volume 123
d. Volume 199

7 What game appeared on the cover of the 50th issue of Nintendo Power?

a. Zelda: Link's Awakening

b. WWF Royal Rumble

c. Mega Man X

8 Which of the games listed below was not the subject of one of the first three official Nintendo Power player's guides (Volumes 13, 15 and 17)?
a. Ninja Gaiden 2
b. Final Fantasy
c. Dragon Warrior

9 Which celebrity's profile graced the pages of Nintendo Power's premiere issue?

a. Wil Wheaton

b. Kirk Cameron

c. Macaulay Culkin

10 In the Nintendo Fun Club News ongoing Top 5 article, what game surprisingly climbed up the charts, finally beating out The Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Bros. and Kid Icarus in the final Fun Club News issue?
a. Mike Tyson's Punch Out!!
b. Rad Racer
c. Castlevania

11 Who was the first president of the Nintendo Fun Club?
a. Howard Phillips
b. Minoru Arakawa
c. Shigeru Miyamoto
d. Steve Thomason

Last month's answers: 1: c, 2: a, 3: b, 4: d, 5: c, 6: c, 7: c, 8: b, 9: b, 10: c, 11: c, 12: d

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JANUARY 2006, VOLUME 199
Behind the Scens: Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, NP Top 200, Inside Zelda, Get a Real Life (Animal Crossing: Wild World), Driven to Succeed (Mario Kart DS), Scoreboard Soaring (Tony Hawk's American Sk8land), Final Frontier (FINAL FANTASY IV Advance), Pinball Wizards, Mini Games Mega Fun (Mario Party 7), How to Win the West (Gun), The Shroob Is Out There (Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time), Battles of Prince of Persia, Black and White Creatures, Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day, Chibi-Robo, Drill Dozer, Electroplankton, Sonic Riders, Super Princess Peach, Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop

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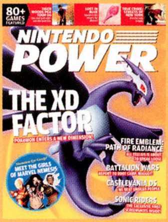
CLASS WARFARE
127 REASONS TO READ THIS ISSUE

DECEMBER 2005, VOLUME 198
Way of the Gun (Gun), On the War Path (Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance), Return to Babylon (Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones), Inside Zelda, NP Top 200, DS Bring It!, International Treasure, Mining Orre's Pokémon (Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness), Bite the Big Apple (Ultimate Spider-Man), Tony Hawk's American Sk8land, Mega Man X Collection, From Russia with Love, Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time, Mario Party 7, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Need for Speed: Most Wanted, The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Dr. Mario and Puzzle League, NP 2005 Holiday Buyer's Guide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NOVEMBER 2005, VOLUME 197
Out of the Shadows (Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness), Fantastic Voyage (Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance), Inside Zelda, NP Top 200, The Bad Girls of Nemesis (Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects), Army of One (Spartan: Total Warrior), Here Comes the Boom (Batallion Wars), Test Your Memory (Trace Memory), Dead of the Dawn (Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow), True Crime: New York City, Call of Duty 2: Big Red One, Viewtiful Joe: Double Trouble, Tony Hawk's American Wasteland, Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble, The Chronicles of Narnia, Super Mario Strikers, Donkey Kong Country 3, The Sims 2

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OCTOBER 2005, VOLUME 196
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HOG HEAVEN!
ZELDA DEMO
HULK RUNS AMOK

SEPTEMBER 2005, VOLUME 195
Sega Goes Hog Wild (Shadow the Hedgehog, Sonic Rush, Sonic Gems Collection), Man's Best Friend (Nintendogs), The Agony and the XD (Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness), Bros. of Summer (Mario Superstar Baseball), Help Wanted (Trauma Center), The Zelda Demo, Inside Zelda, Out of Bounds?, Madden NFL 06, Kirby: Canvas Curse, Smash Bros. Melee, Prince of Persia 3, Mario Tennis Advance, Metroid Prime Pinball, NBA Live 06, WWE: Day of Reckoning 2, Dance Dance Revolution: Mario Mix

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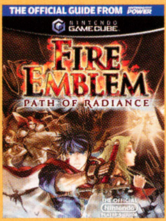
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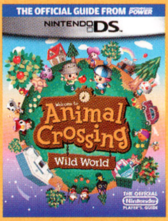
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PRIMED FOR WI-FI

Metroid Prime 2 Echoes brought multiplayer gaming to Samus Aran's universe. Metroid Prime Hunters will sends it into cyberspace. We'll have all the details.

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Our Animal Crossing-obsessed experts are cooking up Wild World design tips to make you the talk of the village.

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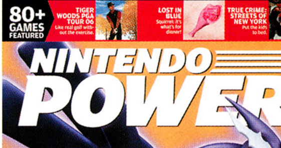
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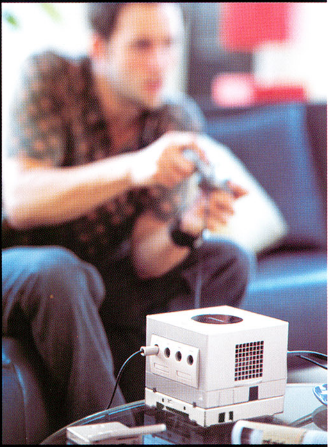

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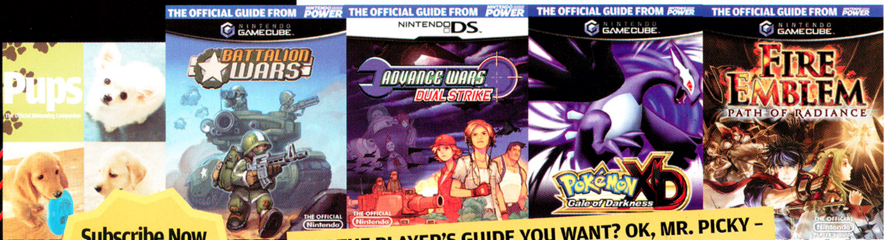
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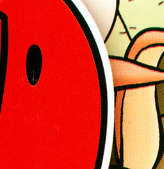
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